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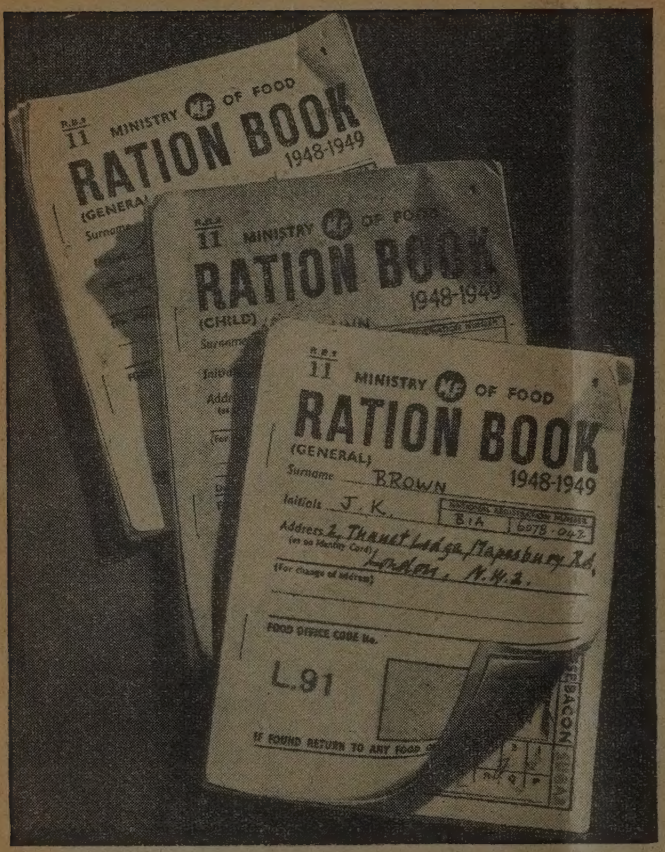

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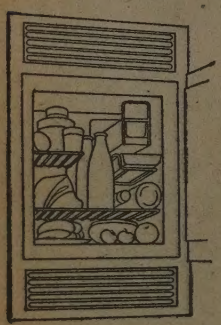

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Local Government Service

JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

Mothers and Babies

THE passing of the hospitals from the hands of the local authorities has focused attention on their chief remaining health activity—the maternity and child welfare services, entrusted by the National Health Service Act to county and county borough councils. To some, they are a new responsibility, and to all the recasting of the health services provides an occasion to examine the present position and to consider the need and possibility of improvement.

Are the services justifying their cost? Should more money, labour, and materials be devoted to them? Could their purpose be achieved more effectively by better deployment? Answers to these questions are not easy to give, for statistical information is defective, and hitherto we have known still less about their quality and effectiveness. For this reason the recent inquiry by the Population Investigation Committee and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynæcologists, the results of which are now available in an attractively written book, "Maternity in Great Britain" (Geoffrey Cumberlege: Oxford University Press, 12s. 6d.), will be warmly welcomed.

Failure of Publicity

The two bodies set out to discover what services are available to women bearing children; how far they are used and what are the factors affecting their use; whether they help women to regard childbirth as a normal process; how far they prevent premature birth and infant death and promote the health of mothers and infants; and what parents spend on pregnancy and childbirth. To find the answers, they got the health visitors of 424 (92 per cent.) of the maternity and child welfare authorities to question the mothers of babies born in a particular week of 1946; and, in addition, made a detailed study of the quality of the service provided by five authorities.

A significant conclusion about ante-natal supervision is that many women come under it too late to gain the maximum benefit. A major reason for this is the failure of many authorities to publicise their services adequately and to emphasise the need for women to seek advice as soon as they know they are pregnant.

The psychological aspect of pregnancy is stressed throughout the report. The unwisdom, for example, of emphasising the abnormal side by requiring an expectant mother to see the doctor every time she attends a clinic is stressed. Often a midwife could provide all the advice that is needed.

The problems of housework during pregnancy and confinement seem to become more rather than less acute. One of the most important contributions to their solution lies in another local authority function—the provision of help with housework. An expansion of the home help service is of transcendent importance for mothers and young children.

Another way of helping the mother both before and after her baby is born would be to provide facilities for the care of older children. Play rooms at centres seem to be the most convenient form of meeting this need, and one hopes this will be remembered when the new and more spacious health centres of the future are designed.

Cost of Maternity

A clear sign that the services as a whole remain inadequate is the fact that well-to-do women get better attention than the poor. They come under ante-natal supervision earlier; they can get a nursing home bed if a hospital one is not available; and they are often given relief from pain in labour. It is clearly the duty of the local authorities to even out these inequalities between rich and poor and between the large and the small family. Some improvements have been made since the report was written. The provision of analgesia by midwives has been extended; in London and many other places, for instance, the problem of distributing gas-and-air machines has been solved by allying the service to that of ambulance operation.

Although it is an aspect of the problem with which the local authority is only indirectly concerned, the heavy financial burden of childbirth remains a serious barrier to the raising of a family. The average working class family, the survey reveals, spends £28 on childbirth and receives only £6 in maternity grants. Most of the services are now free, and the main expenditure is on baby and maternity clothes, cots, prams, and so on. The remedy lies either in higher maternity grants or in State measures for reducing the prices of essential articles.

While some of the detail of this book may be out of date, the accuracy of its broad conclusions will not be contested. It shows that, while the general structure of the services is sound, there is still room for improvement in many items. There is also need for a greater sense of urgency in filling in the gaps, bringing the value of the service home, and establishing standards to measure its efficiency and so point the way to further improvements.

Public Service Pay

"LOCAL authorities throughout the country," wrote the "Daily Telegraph" on January 10, "are becoming increasingly concerned at the number of officials who are leaving their service for much higher paid posts with State concerns, such as nationalised electricity undertakings and regional hospitals boards." As an example, it reported that Newcastle corporation had lost more than 100 "key" employees from the city treasurer's department alone, and it declared that some authorities were considering increasing the pay of their staff to meet the competition.

The report went on to suggest that the salaries attracting these officers were often excessive.

While there is some truth in the first part of this report, there is little in the second, and N A L G O's general secretary put the matter in its proper perspective in a letter to which the paper gave pride of place in its correspondence column three days later.

The exodus from the local government into the nationalised services was undoubtedly serious for local government, he wrote. But the reason was not that the salaries offered by nationalised undertakings were excessive. In the higher ranges, they merely reflected current market rates—and the fact that in many cases they were higher than in local government confirmed N A L G O's oft-repeated contention that local government salaries were too low.

In the lower ranges of the nationalised services, pay was still far from satisfactory and remained well below the general level for work of equivalent skill and responsibility. The traditional loyalty of the public servant, his unwillingness to strike, had hitherto masked the position; but that loyalty was not inexhaustible. If the nation wanted efficient public service, Mr. Warren warned, it must be prepared to pay for it at a reasonable market rate. Otherwise, youngsters would refuse to enter the service and the able men and women in it would seek higher rewards elsewhere.

Threat to Efficiency

The "Telegraph" took up this point in a leading article which will have the support of every officer struggling to keep his head above the ever-rising tide of living costs. "Up to April last year," it wrote, "the average weekly wages of employees [by which, presumably, is meant manual workers] in the local government services had increased by 77 per cent. over pre-war, which is about equal to the rise in the cost of living. Salaries of officials, on the other hand, have in general lagged well behind. The inevitable result is not only that officials are being attracted elsewhere, but that the best types of men and women are not being recruited to the service. Ultimately, the effect on efficiency can hardly fail to be disastrous."

It is to be hoped that local authorities will heed the warning before it is too late.

It is the aim of "Local Government Service" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in this journal—whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles — should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.

Public Relations is Essential if Local Government is to Remain Democratic

By Mrs. K. LITTLE, Ex-Chairman, Holborn Borough Council Public Relations Committee

We have published many articles on public relations from the point of view of the officer. Here is one from the point of view of the councillor. Its author was chairman of one of the most enterprising local authority public relations committees in the country.

SOME boroughs regard public relations as an unintelligible subject to be filed under the heading "Comic," sub-heading "Beneath Our Civic Dignity." Others, believing that there must be something to it because their neighbour is advertising for a public relations officer, classify the subject as "Modern Development," sub-heading "Move With Caution." There are local authorities with public relations officers but no public relations committee, and there are authorities with public relations committees but no public relations officers. The Consultative Committee on Local Government Publicity—a joint committee of the Ministry of Health, the Associations of Local Authorities, and the L.C.C.—has issued a report on the subject, NALGO and PEP have published pamphlets, and the Metropolitan Boroughs Standing Joint Committee has asked its constituent councils for their observations—quite a stir in the land.

What *is* public relations (or should it be what *are* public relations)? It might help first to say what it isn't. In my opinion, it is not propaganda; neither is it merely the provision of an information centre. It is not a bold and wicked plan conceived by an even bolder and more wicked political party (a) to advertise itself at the ratepayers' expense or (b) to thrust bureaucracy down the people's throats. It is not a series of irrelevant, dull, dreary exhibitions; it is not the display of useless posters. And it is not a modern invention.

Contact with the People

Public relations is as old as democracy, and is, in fact, a return to the basic principle of direct representation of the elector by the elected. Unless there is a close link between these two, it seems to me that there is little to be said for local government. I doubt whether a council sweeps the streets more effectively than would a private firm, or that it collects rubbish, calculates assessments, lends books, or examines babies any better than other suppliers of such services could do. What *is* important is that local government supplies these services in the name of the people on a non-profit-making basis. The cost is shared by all, and the policy is decided by citizens who are elected, not to be more important than anyone else, but to carry out the detailed planning of a programme submitted by them at election time.

On paper, this sounds simple. In practice, the elected representative has a very full-time part-time job. Many are the groups of councillors who, in 1945, published their programme, got themseleves elected, formed their committees—and then proceeded to discover all the difficulties, technical and administrative, which are put in the way of enthusiastic councils. County authorities, ministries, opposition parties, licences, materials, labour, are all thorns in the flesh. After three years of struggling, only the most valiant, obstinate, strong-minded, and strong-bodied councillors are still determined to carry out the programme on which they were elected.

In carrying out the programme, it is their duty to keep in constant touch with the electorate. If part of their original programme cannot be carried out, the public should be told. If new plans are proposed, the views of the public upon them should be heard. Projects which have been carried out should be described and explained, suggestions and criticisms invited. All this is public relations—simply the continuance of effective liaison between council and people.

How "effective liaison" is interpreted is a matter for the public relations committee (or its equivalent). The ways are many, but fall under four main headings:

1. *Dissemination of Information*

This may take the form of
(a) Posters, leaflets, and bulletins;
(b) Verbal information given by the staff of the information centre or by other officers in touch with the public, such as sanitary inspectors, health visitors, rate collectors;
(c) Exhibitions and films, brains trusts, etc.;
(d) Public meetings;
(e) House-to-house visits by councillors;
(f) Arranging definite times at which members of the public can meet their councillors for discussion.

2. *Projection of the Public to the Council.*

(a) Consideration by the relevant committee of concrete suggestions made by sufficient members of the public;
(b) The placing of rooms or halls at the disposals of group activities in the borough.

3. *Discussion of Projects.*

(a) Public meetings based on one or more subjects, such as housing, libraries, maternity and child welfare, with statements by the chairmen and members of committees, followed by discussion;
(b) Question-time after council meetings—a period during which members of the public could be allowed to submit written questions to members of the council;
(c) Special times and places for members of the public to meet councillors and discuss difficulties.

4. *Educational Activities.*

(a) Exhibitions, lectures, recitals, etc., of the kind arranged by many libraries;
(b) General exhibitions and displays of films on local government in all its aspects;
(c) Encouragement of cultural activities—provision of concerts, plays, puppet shows, and of facilities for the people to make their own music, act plays, and so on.

What of the machinery to carry out these plans? Is it desirable to have a public relations committee? Of what use is a public relations officer? Of course, the position varies from authority to authority. But one of the smallest boroughs in London has a public relations committee which finds its time more than fully occupied.

The question becomes one of the imaginativeness of councillors, their ability to recognise their functions as elected representatives, and their duties to the citizens. If councillors take these duties seriously and carry them out imaginatively, they will find it necessary to have a public relations committee and to appoint a public relations officer.

A newly appointed public relations committee will meet difficulties. Other committees may regard its efforts at co-ordination as interference. They will jealously guard their right to make decisions, design their own posters, and run their own exhibitions regardless of a centralised policy.

To overcome this attitude the public relations officer and his committee will have to prove to other officers and committees that they are seeking to co-operate, not to dominate.

When a council appoints a public relations officer it looks for specialist qualifications in such jobs as printing, Press publicity, and organisation of meetings, exhibitions, film shows, and similar activities. But it needs to go deeper than this. The man or woman who is successfully to run a public relations department must have a firm conviction of the democratic principles of local government. He or she must see the fundamental necessity of the three-way link—the people, the elected representatives, and the paid officials at the town hall. He must see that the people are kept well informed of the council's activities and are encouraged to take an interest and play an active part in their own local government; and he must persuade the councillors and his fellow-officers to share this view.

Staff Co-operation Invited

In my own borough the public relations committee arranges meetings with the staff, at which chairmen of committees outline committee policy and invite suggestions from the staff. We have agreed to circulate a departmental bulletin to ensure that each department is kept informed about general activities.

We want to introduce a question hour at the end of the council meeting so that members of the public can gain information from the councillors.

We have run brains trusts on road safety, the B.B.C. has broadcast programmes on our laundry services for men, our kiddies' corner at the swimming pool, and our summer entertainments.

Our Press-cuttings book contains newspaper items about our services, taken from papers published in many parts of the world.

What is the value of all this? I think that any exchange of ideas is worth while. Civic pride may be a good thing, but we must beware of parochialism. If we have good ideas in our borough, it is right that they should be introduced elsewhere. And we should welcome information on local government from other parts of the world.

Local government can, and should, be the finest example of democracy at work. Our national tradition, that the layman represents the people and fixes policy in their name, and that the paid official is a permanent and non-political appointment, goes deep. Its value is apparent when we see what happens in other countries with a different system.

The public relations committee and department should have this tradition firmly in mind all the time. The basis of their day-to-day work should be the conception that local government is the provision of services for the local people. The nearer these services approximate to the needs of the people, the nearer we shall be to a truly democratic form of government. To achieve this, a deliberate policy of public relations is essential.

NALGO'S PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY EXPANDED

More Emphasis on Interpreting Association to Members and Members to the Public

NALGO is re-casting its public relations policy to give greater emphasis to projection of the Association to members, and of members to the public. The changes were summarised in the November Journal, but in view of their importance to every member, we publish here an extended summary of the memorandum, drafted by the chairman and vice-chairman of the N.E.C. public relations committee and the public relations officer, and now approved by the N.E.C., upon which they were based. This memorandum will be submitted to Conference, together with detailed proposals—now under consideration—for giving effect to it. We shall welcome readers' comments.

I HISTORY AND OBJECTS OF POLICY

THE Association's public relations policy may be said to have begun in 1931 as an attempt to defeat the threat of salary cuts for local government officers contained in the report of the May Committee on national expenditure. At first concerned directly with officers' salaries, it gradually evolved into the policy currently defined as "a deliberate and sustained effort to create a more understanding and co-operative relationship between the local government service and the community it serves."

Such a policy has been regarded as essential to the successful prosecution of the Association's trade union work on two grounds:

(i) Public employees cannot hope to achieve their aims of reasonable salaries and conditions of service until they can satisfy the public, their ultimate employers, of the value and importance of the work they do;

(ii) In addition to striving for better salaries and service conditions for its members, it is part of NALGO's function as a trade union to seek for them congenial, useful, and satisfying careers in the public service; and for this, popular understanding and support of the service is essential.

Authorities' Help Sought

In the early stages, the public relations committee tried to win greater popular understanding of the public service by its own efforts, conducted from Headquarters and in the branches. It soon discovered, however, that, with its limited resources, it was impossible to make effective progress in this direction without the support, moral and material, of the local authorities, whose approval was essential for many publicity activities and who were in a position to give substantial aid financially. For this reason—and also because it considered it to be a proper function of a local authority to seek popular understanding of its work—the committee set out to win the support of the local authorities for a policy of public relations for local government. Locally, it advised branches to invite their councils to appoint joint public relations committees, to stage exhibitions, to form panels of speakers, and to undertake similar enterprises, the branch offering full co-operation. Nationally, it sought the support of the local authorities, their associations, the Ministry of Health, the press, and the public, for this policy.

Although the war delayed progress, substantial impetus was given to this campaign by the publication, in 1944, of the report of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee on Relations Between Local Government and the Community, and by the preparation, in 1945, of the NALGO local government exhibition. The report was sent to Government departments, to every local authority, and to the press, was given widespread publicity, and attracted much interest. It was endorsed by Political and Economic Planning, adopted in principle by many local authorities, and led to the formation, by the Ministry of Health and the associations of local authorities, of the Consultative Committee on Local Government Publicity, whose own interim report, published in 1947, did little more than repeat and underline its main conclusions of principle (though rejecting some of its proposals on machinery). The exhibition acted as a "trigger" and nucleus for the holding of local exhibitions, some on a most ambitious scale, and was also widely used by the education services of the Armed Forces and by many other bodies.

Policy Widely Accepted

As a result of these and other efforts, the idea of public relations for local government, conducted by local authorities, is now widely accepted: fifty local authorities have appointed full-time salaried public relations officers; many more are engaging to some extent in the public relations activities advocated by the committee; and the Ministry of Health and the associations of local authorities have endorsed and urged the further development of the policy . . .

In placing primary emphasis on public relations for local government, the committee has not neglected public relations for the officer. It has, for example, from time to time circulated press articles from Headquarters on the work of different types of local government officer; it has advised on the preparation of books, films, film-strips, exhibitions, and other material stressing the part played by the officer; and in all its recommendations to branches it has stressed the importance of telling the "story" of the officer and his work in their local propaganda . . .

Nor has the committee neglected public relations for the Association directed (a) to its members and (b) to the public generally. The main channel for the first has, of course, been LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, supplemented by pamphlets, propaganda meetings, and the activities of district committees, branches, and the district staff. LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE is to-day devoting practically the whole of its space to this work . . .

Public relations for NALGO directed at the public has always been one of the functions of the public relations committee, but it presents exceptional difficulties. It must be recognised that the normal trade union work of the Association is of no interest to members of the public generally save in so far as it affects them directly, either by increasing the cost of public services, or by improving the quality of those services, and that an attempt to gain general publicity for this work would have little prospect of success . . .

In this connection, it would be appropriate here to refer to a misconception of the possibility of obtaining publicity which would appear to be held by many members. This misconception is illustrated by the representations which have been made to the committee recently, complaining that propaganda on the improvement of salaries is "totally inadequate"; calling for a "vigorous campaign at once with a view to bringing about the improvements already claimed"; and suggesting that the committee should take "active measures to acquaint the public, through the national press, and by any other means available, of the grievances of local government officers in the matter of remuneration."

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the press, and the public, are not interested in the grievances, as such, of local government officers, and that a "campaign" directed solely to obtaining publicity for those grievances would be unlikely to succeed. Every section of the community has grievances of one kind or another against its employers. Every section of the community wants more pay—or, more correctly, a higher standard of living.

Grievances and claims for higher salaries are, therefore, not "news" in the newspaper sense of the term. They become "news" only when those having the grievances or claiming the higher pay embark on dramatic or unusual action to give expression to their claims. Miners may have long objected to working an extra "stint"; dockers may have long resented their disciplinary code; hotel employees may have long complained about their conditions—but no word of those grievances appears in the press until the miners and dockers interfere with the public's coal and food supply, and the hotel workers hold up transport by lying down in the road. In such cases it is the strike, not the grievance, which is "news"—and it is probably true to say that the publicity given to it is, in the long run, generally more harmful than beneficial to the strikers' interests.

A Double-Edged Weapon

In these circumstances, it is suggested that a "campaign" of the kind proposed, designed to "acquaint the public with the grievances of local government officers" would be entirely inappropriate to NALGO. The Association has never supported strikes and similar aggressive means of enforcing its claims, and is unlikely to do so: and, in the absence of such measures, would find it virtually impossible to obtain any worthwhile publicity for its grievances: while, should the publicity be obtained, it is doubtful whether the effect on the public mind would be quite what those who seek it hope. It is a common human failing, while seeking more money for oneself, to resent the claims of others, and experience suggests that widespread publicity for the demands of NALGO members would be likely to evoke jealousy, criticism, and opposition rather than understanding and support . . . Publicity is a powerful weapon, but it is double-edged and may often wound those who wield it.

While it would thus be difficult, and of doubtful advantage, for NALGO to seek publicity for its grievances and claims in the

field of service conditions, it would be feasible and of considerable value in enhancing the Association's prestige for it to seek publicity for its views on matters of public interest, topical or long-term, upon which it is qualified to speak. Good examples of the possibilities of such publicity were provided by the two reports of the Reconstruction Committee, both of which obtained widespread (and continuing) publicity, both of which materially enhanced the reputation of the Association in the eyes of the public, and both of which have influenced the policy of the Government and local authorities.

Unfortunately, since the first report of the Reconstruction Committee aroused controversy within the Association, the National Executive Council has been shy of expressing a view on controversial issues—with the result that many opportunities of obtaining valuable publicity and possibly of modifying public policy have been missed. For example, such events as the transfer of powers from local authorities to Government departments and regional boards, the report of the Boundary Commission, and the decision of the Government to postpone revision of the framework of local government, have been allowed to pass without any statement of the views of the Association upon them. Similarly, upon many less important matters affecting its members, the Association might have expressed an opinion had any machinery been available for it to do so . . .

II. THE CASE FOR REVIEW

The success of the work hitherto undertaken in developing public relations for the service would in itself have made a review of the Association's policy in this field desirable at this stage. In addition, developments in the past year or two—expansion of the Association's membership in the public utility and health services—have made it clear that reconsideration and possibly some change of policy are essential.

There is evidence, on the one hand, that members in the local government service are apathetic towards the policy as it has hitherto been developed, failing to see in it any immediate value to themselves and regarding it as in any event primarily a function of the local authorities rather than of an officers' trade union; and, on the other hand, that members outside local government have failed to find in the policy any clear application to their own needs and circumstances. For these reasons, the public relations committee has felt it necessary to consider the whole policy afresh . . .

III. PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE POLICY

In general, the public relations committee has found no justification for a drastic break with the policy as pursued hitherto, still less for the complete abandonment of any part of that policy at a time when it is just beginning to reap dividends. Whilst it is true that the policy has met with a large measure of success in gaining the support of the local authorities, it is equally true that much more remains to be done before it can be said that public relations for local government is being conducted on a sufficiently comprehensive and widespread scale. Moreover, the work already initiated by the Consultative Committee on Publicity for Local Government and by some local authorities is not yet sufficiently well-based to be certain of continuing and expanding in the right direction without constant stimulus. NALGO is still the only body sufficiently interested to provide that stimulus: and were it to abandon the work it has begun it is possible that, lacking the impetus it now provides, interest in public relations would lapse and much of the ground gained would be lost.

Subject to the necessity to continue the main lines of the present policy, however, the public relations committee considers that there is need for some redirection of effort, with a rather different emphasis. It recommends, therefore, that, in the immediate future, the policy should concentrate on the various aspects of public relations in the following order of priority:

1. **Publicity for NALGO, directed at the Association's members;**
2. **Public relations for the officer;**
3. **Public relations for the service; and**
4. **Public relations for NALGO, directed at the public generally.**

On these four aspects of the policy, the committee submits the following observations:

Publicity for NALGO, Directed at the Association's Members.—This is not public relations at all, but is rather propaganda in which many of the techniques and some of the media of public relations can be employed . . . The widespread complaints from branches of the ignorance of members of the Association's activities and of general apathy, suggest . . . that there has been inadequate appreciation of the scale of this problem and the varied methods necessary to tackle it.

THE PLAN IN BRIEF

The public relations committee summarised its recommendations as follows:

1. While there is no case for a drastic break with the public relations policy as hitherto conducted, there is a case for its modification to give higher priority to publicity for the Association directed to its members and to public relations for the officer, with public relations for the service and public relations for NALGO taking third and fourth places respectively;

2. All propaganda to members should be prepared and conducted by the public relations committee, in close co-operation with the other committees concerned;

3. The co-operation of branch and district public relations committees should be sought in conducting a propaganda and recruitment campaign;

4. Public relations for the officer can best be conducted at this stage by an intensive drive, through the branches and by all other suitable means, to stimulate among individual members more efficient, courteous, and human service.

5. The present policy of inspiring, stimulating, and co-operating in the development by local authorities and other bodies of public relations for the service should be maintained as far as practicable;

6. Public relations for NALGO can best be undertaken by the publication by the Association of statements and documents on matters of public interest. To encourage this, the powers and responsibilities of the general secretary in issuing statements to the press should be redefined; and machinery should be created for the setting up of small but expert research panels to conduct research into and prepare reports upon specific problems, such reports to be published independently of but under the auspices of the Association.

The public relations committee wishes to express the view that the projection of the Association to its members and potential members is so important that the technical side of the work should be in the charge of one committee and that, in future, all propaganda and publicity on any aspect of Association policy should be prepared and conducted by the public relations committee, in the closest co-operation with, and on the advice of, the committee particularly concerned with any particular item . . .

In addition to itself preparing propaganda material, it would be of advantage were the public relations committee to use the branch and district organisation already in being for this work locally, and to suggest to branch and district public relations committees and officers that they should follow its example and, without allowing public relations for the service to lapse, give a higher priority in their activities to propaganda for the Association . . .

Public Relations for the Officer.—This aspect of public relations presents peculiar difficulties, for two reasons:

(i) Local government and the health and utility services contain such a wide variety of officers that it would be impossible to publicise them all; while to attempt to create a "typical" or "average" public official for publicity purposes might arouse misunderstanding and defeat its purpose;

(ii) Too definite a connection between publicity for the Association's service conditions claims and publicity for the officer and his work might forfeit the good will and support of government departments, local authorities, and the press, which has been such a valuable feature of our public relations policy as hitherto conducted.

These factors, however, need not restrict unduly the nature and scope of any centrally conducted campaign of publicity for the officer as such. There are undoubtedly many officers whose work, if known, would be of great public interest, and any publicity given to their activities, by "humanising" the service generally, would create good will which must inevitably "spill over" to the advantage of all officers. Nor would the difficulties cited above affect a campaign directed at the officer himself, designed to make his service more efficient and acceptable to the public. The public relations committee has always urged that the best public relations officer for the local government service is the individual officer himself, since it is by his conduct that the public will judge the service as a whole. Were NALGO to embark on an intensive educational drive throughout its membership for the prompt, efficient, and human conduct of business, it would benefit the officer—and the service—directly and effectively . . .

Public Relations for the Service.—Since this has been the main plank of the Association's policy for some years, there is little need to develop it here. For the reasons already given, the public relations committee considers that no drastic change is called for in this aspect of the policy, beyond the reduction of effort envisaged in the realignment of the whole policy already recommended: that is to say, the Association . . . should continue to inspire, stimulate, and co-operate, but should not devote as much time and effort to this work as hitherto . . .

Public Relations for NALGO, Directed at the Public.—The fact that NALGO is to-day the biggest trade union of non-manual workers in the country, and probably in the world, should result in its making a greater impact on the public: but the extent to which

it can do this must depend upon how far it is prepared to express opinions on matters of public interest. For the public is not, in general, concerned or interested in the Association's trade union activities . . . There are, it is suggested, three ways in which the Association could obtain publicity likely to enhance its prestige in the public eye:

(i) By making "snap" pronouncements and statements on matters of topical interest upon which it is qualified to express an opinion;

(ii) By making more considered statements on matters of public concern; and

(iii) By engaging in research on matters of public interest and publishing the results of that research.

Theoretically, it is possible now to make "snap" pronouncements, by virtue of the recommendation of the public relations committee of July 12, 1947, subsequently confirmed by the National Executive Council, that the general secretary "be given unfettered discretion to make statements to the press on behalf of the Association." In practice, however, the general secretary has found the "freedom" conferred on him by this resolution more restrictive than would have been a closer definition of his powers and responsibilities and, in the absence of any indication of the views of the National Executive Council upon many of the topics about which the Association's comments are sought, has felt unable to express what could be no more than a personal opinion. The public relations committee therefore recommends that the Council should define more clearly the powers and responsibilities of the general secretary in this connection . . .

Research Panels

The suggestions that the Association should make considered statements on matters of public concern, and should engage in, and publish the results of research on matters of public interest—have been before the committee on a number of occasions, but apart from the reports of the Reconstruction Committee already referred to, little has been done to give effect to them. A major obstacle, apart from the fear of arousing controversy, is the lack of machinery to prepare and agree statements on matters of importance to the service. Although the Association includes within its ranks experts in almost every field of public service, it has at present no means of eliciting and co-ordinating their views on topics outside the limited range of trade union policy . . . Yet there are many matters coming before the public and closely affecting all or some of the Association's members . . . upon which it has not only a right, but a duty —to the public as well as to its members—to express a view, and upon which its view might reasonably be expected to be given valuable publicity . . .

The public relations committee recommends that the National Executive Council should from time to time set up small *ad hoc* research panels of carefully selected persons (not necessarily from its own membership) to investigate and report upon aspects of public service and administration which affect the life of the Association and its members, or other matters of public interest upon which they are qualified to speak . . .

Such an arrangement would have the advantage that it would:

(i) Provide reports calculated to secure wide publicity and thereby enhance the prestige of the Association as a body which cared deeply about the public service and was constantly striving to improve it;

(ii) Enlist and stimulate the interest and enthusiasm of members; and

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(Continued from preceding column)

(iii) Assist the Association in the organisational field by providing a basis of knowledge upon which future policy could be formulated . . .

The changes of policy here recommended have the further advantage that they make the public relations policy suitable for the whole of the Association's membership without requiring special measures for particular sections, such as those in the utility and hospital services. Thus, publicity for NALGO would be applicable to *all* members (though, naturally, it may call for different approaches to the various sections); public relations for the *officer* would refer to *all* officers, whatever their particular service; public relations for the *service* would deal with utilities and hospitals as well as local government; and the reports and statements suggested under the heading of public relations for NALGO would also deal with problems affecting all sections of membership . . .

Should these recommendations be approved by the National Executive Council, the committee will give further consideration to the steps necessary to give effect to them and . . . will, if desired, submit a further report on this matter.

These steps were considered by the public relations committee on January 15 but, since they are still subject to the approval of the N.E.C., it would be inappropriate to report the conclusions yet. They will be reported as soon as the N.E.C. has endorsed them.

Wembley Housing Conferences Keep the Citizen Informed—and the Officer Respected

OVERCROWDED families and young couples living with in-laws are not the only victims of the housing shortage. There are many others, and notable among them the housing manager himself.

Many housing managers have written to NALGO's legal department recently, complaining of whispering campaigns against them, of slanderous rumours that "Five pounds slipped over the counter is the only way to get a house," and of calumnies of which they cannot name the source.

"I told Mrs. X," wrote one, "that I could not help her at present. She then said that she supposed that if she offered me £10, 'as Mr. Y had done,' I would give her a house."

Another reported that when he challenged a man who had made an accusation against him, he received the reply: "I was only repeating what was generally rumoured."

A third complained that, when he returned to his office after a few days' absence, he found the rumour spreading that he had been dismissed for accepting bribes from applicants for houses.

Sometimes the allegation of corruption is by implication—as when tenants in a rural district called for inquiry into the competence of the housing committee and its manager. Sometimes it is accompanied by physical violence.

Legal Action Not Enough

What to do about such allegations is providing NALGO's legal department with one of its biggest headaches to-day. Legal action is often impossible, and even when possible does not always meet the situation. Take the case of Mrs. X, for example. She had heard, or thought she had heard, that the housing manager had accepted a bribe from Mr. Y to give him priority on the waiting list. Harassed by the inconvenience and hardship of inadequate accommodation, and frustrated by continual refusals of a house, she blurted out what she had heard—but probably only partly believed. What should the housing manager do—ask her to repeat it before witnesses and take her to court, or accept the allegation as politely as he can and suggest that, if she suspect corruption, she should go to the police?

Both courses have their disadvantages. Recourse to court proceedings will give wide publicity to what was said only privately, and, though the housing manager might, if his accuser is well off, secure damages and costs (often he will get neither), he is unlikely to win popularity or public confidence—for people are readier to believe evil than good, and some of the mud will stick. To take no action, on the other hand, might be regarded as implying that he fears inquiry, and the rumours might spread.

In most cases of suspicion, rumour, and vague allegation of this kind, a better remedy is provided, not by invoking the law, but by prevention and sterilisation through public relations. Just as fresh air and sunshine will help prevent disease, so will fuller public knowledge of local authority action help kill the germs of suspicion and mistrust before they can infect the public's confidence in those who serve it.

A most enlightened—and successful—attempt at such preventive work has just been made by Wembley Borough Council. The council has a waiting list of 3,000 for houses, and, not unnaturally, there has been a good deal of grumbling among them. To meet it, the council invited every one of them to a series of three conferences, at which the applicants were told frankly what had been done to provide the houses, what further action was intended, and how accommodation was allocated under a points scheme; and were given full opportunity to cross-examine the council and its officers, and to ventilate their own complaints and suggestions.

The invitation was eagerly accepted, and, although thick fog on the night of the first meeting paralysed London's traffic, the town hall was filled, some applicants travelling from as far afield as Liverpool, Cheltenham, and Worthing.

Every member of the audience had been provided in advance with two statements, one outlining the policy, achievements, and plans of the post-war housing committee; the other describing the "points" scheme by which houses were allocated to applicants by the housing and town planning committee.

After a few words of introduction by the mayor, the chairmen of the post-war housing and the housing and town planning committees each made ten-minute statements explaining and amplifying the information given in the documents.

Suspicion into Confidence

Then the real business of the conference began. Thirty people with a grouse, a question, or a suggestion, whose names had been drawn from a silver bowl by the mayor, came to the microphone for five minutes' freedom to say exactly what they liked and to put any question they wished, with the promise of a public reply.

Why, asked one, should ex-Service personnel get preference in the points scheme to those who, for medical reasons, were rejected by the forces?

How was it, added another, that the council was still acquiring land for building? Why had it not already acquired all the land it needed?

Was anyone seeing to it, demanded a third, that no unscrupulous person invited eviction to force the authority to place him high on the waiting list?

When all the questions had been asked and ideas put forward, the chairmen dealt with every point raised, fully and frankly. Policy was explained, the extent of the council's powers to meet the demand for housing clearly defined, individual applicants were told how their cases were being treated, and every useful suggestion was promised close examination.

The effect was astounding. Although the conference did not produce a single house, and thus left nobody one whit better off than before, it transformed the atmosphere. People whose thoughts had been dominated by their own hardships realised that there were others in even worse plight. People who had condemned the council came to understand its difficulties and to appreciate that it was doing everything it could. Criticism of the council was transformed into respect for the soundness of its policy; suspicion of its methods became appreciation of their fairness; and—of particular interest to NALGO—doubt of the integrity of the officers was converted into confidence.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT N.J.C. DECISIONS

Start Made With Group Grading | Expenses Scale Amended | Revision of Car Allowances | Hours Concession to Engineers

BUT ANOMALIES AND HOLIDAY CLAIMS SHELVED AGAIN

IMPORTANT decisions on grading of special classes of officer, subsistence allowances and travelling expenses, and motor-car allowances, were reached by the National Joint Council for the local government service when it met in London on January 18.

It was reported that the sub-committee on the grading of special classes had received proposals from sectional and professional organisations covering some 30 classes of officers in the local government service. The sub-committee has already begun consideration of the grading of certain classes. At each meeting, representatives of the professional organisations concerned will be invited to make submissions.

The Council approved the report. Since, however, recommendations of the sub-committees must be reported to the executive committee, and from it to the Council, it will be some time before the agreed recommendations can be announced.

Subsistence Allowances

The sub-committee on subsistence allowances and travelling expenses reported the following conclusions on points submitted to it:

Officers beyond the salary limit for payment of overtime should not be paid both tea and dinner allowances in respect of the same evening's work. Dinner allowance should be payable if an officer works after 8.30 p.m.

The allowances set out under para. 19 (c) of the Charter for officers "travelling in the performance of occasional or exceptional duties involving continuous absence for not less than eight hours from the normal seat or place of residence," are intended to cover all officers absent on duty at some distance from their administrative centre as, for example, in the case of the provinces, attendance in London upon Ministries and the like. The committee considered, however, that the allowance of £1 1s. for an absence of more than eight hours but not involving an overnight stay was excessive. It recommended that, in such circumstances, the allowance paid should be based on the full meal allowance rates (4s. lunch, 2s. 6d. tea, and 6s. dinner) plus other out-of-pocket expenses actually and reasonably incurred, and that, for this purpose, a breakfast allowance of 4s. should be added to the meal allowances.

While the sub-committee saw no reason to alter the existing rates for absences involving a night or nights away from home (£1 1s. a day and 15s. a night), it considered that these rates were not meant to apply to attendance at conferences and courses involving a prolonged stay. It therefore recommended that, where such absence exceeded four days, local authorities should meet only the out-of-pocket expenses reasonably incurred.

It was also pointed out that the Charter made no provision for payment of expenses of travel other than by rail. To meet the position of officers required to travel by car or taxi where travel by public service vehicles was neither possible nor suitable, it recommended that these expenses (including gratuities) be authorised, subject to the general principle that such methods of travel should be used only in cases of urgency and where no public service was reasonably available.

No agreement has yet been reached on meal allowances to be paid to the "travelling" or "outside" officer when engaged on the normal and routine duties of his post.

All these recommendations were approved by the executive and the N.J.C.

Back to Old Car Scale

The sub-committee on motor-car allowances made the following recommendations:

Mileage Allowances.—In view of the issue of a standard petrol ration, allowances to authorised officers using their private cars on official duties should be in accordance with Appendix B of the scheme approved by the N.J.C. on October 31, 1947. This provided for the following mileage allowances:

Miles p.a.	*Up to 8h.p. or 1014c.c.*	*8-10h.p. or 1014- 1214c.c.*	*Over 10h.p. or 1214c.c.*
First 3,600	5½d	6½d	7½d
Next 3,600	3½d	4d	4½d
Excess over 7,200	1½d	1¾d	2d

together, in the case of officers required to use their private cars, with an amount sufficient, if necessary, to bring the mileage allowance up to a guaranteed annual minimum payment of £84 for cars up to 8 h.p. or 1014 c.c.; £96 for cars between 8 and 10 h.p. or between 1014 and 1214 c.c.; and £108 for cars over 10 h.p. or 1214 c.c The effect of this recommendation will be to abolish, from April 1, the "addendum" allowances approved during the period when private travel was banned.

It was also recommended that, where a car was not in use as a result of mechanical defect or illness of the officer concerned, the joint secretaries should be authorised to advise local authorities of the extent to which the guaranteed minimum payment might be abated. The sub-committee decided not to introduce a standard scale of allowances for motor-cycles.

These recommendations were approved by the full Council.

Staff Claims Deferred

The Council deferred yet again its consideration of the staff side claim for removal of the anomalies created by the consolidation award given nearly a year ago, and the claim, also submitted by the staff side, for an increase in the scale of annual leave. Both claims were before the executive committee on December 15, but that body adjourned consideration, on the first because it wanted more information, and on the second because the employers' side of the committee wished to consult the employers' side of the full Council.

The executive did, however, recommend the removal of one anomaly created by the consolidation award. This—to which attention was drawn by the London district council—arose from the fact that, whereas the award had given women in the A.P.T. division complete equality with men, adding £60 to their pre-consolidation salaries, it had left women with emoluments or with salaries above the pre-consolidation maximum of £700 in the same position as before—with the result that their basic salaries were increased by only £50, the amount of the pre-consolidation bonus. The executive recommended that the salaries of such women be increased by £10 from January 1, 1949, to bring them into parity with men, and the Council approved.

38-Hour Week for Librarians

Other recommendations of the executive, with the decisions of the full Council upon them, are summarised below:

Salary Scales Above £760.—Proposals for additional salary scales beyond £760, made necessary by the decision to increase the salary "ceiling" within the purview of the National Joint Council to £1,000, were referred to the sub-committee on the grading of special classes.

Library Staffs—Hours of Duty.—Recommended: (a) that the normal hours of duty of library staffs be 38; (b) that the previous ruling of the N.J.C., that an officer with whom it is a special condition of employment that he shall normally work longer hours should continue to work such hours, be not applicable to library staffs; and (c) that the decision under (a) be without prejudice to the right of an employing authority to review the grading of the posts of library staff where, in fixing such grading, regard had been paid to any special condition of employment in relation to longer hours.

Agreed—that the recommendation be adopted.

Office Hours—Engineers.—Paragraph 9 of the Charter laid it down that an official with whom it was a special condition of employment to work longer hours than clerical staff should "continue to be subject to the conditions relating to hours in operation prior to 1st April, 1946," the date on which the Charter came into operation. East Ham branch had submitted, through the North Metropolitan provincial council, that this involved hardship on engineers, who were required to work the 48-hour week applicable before April 1, 1946, although, since then, the 44-hour week had become general in the engineering industry. The executive recommend that the paragraph be amended by deletion of the words quoted above and substitution of the words "will continue to be subject to such special condition of employment in relation to hours." The effect of this decision is to allow a local authority to vary the working hours of engineers, instead of requiring it, as did the original paragraph, to retain the hours operative before the Charter was approved.

Agreed—that the recommendation be adopted.

Retrospective Grading

Grading Appeals.—The Yorkshire provincial council had pointed out that its appeals committee continued to receive claims that particular posts came within the purview of the Charter and should be graded. When this was done, the employing authority was required to apply the grade approved with retrospective effect to April 1, 1946, since the resolution of the N.J.C. fixing a time limit for appeals referred specifically to the original grading of posts and did not cover posts which had not previously been graded. The appeals committee considered that retrospective application of grading in such cases was unreasonable. It suggested that a difference involving a question of principle as to whether an employee was an officer to whom the Charter applied, as distinct from a question arising from the application of the detailed provisions of the Charter, should be dealt with as a difference between a local authority and its officers, and that any decision in favour of the employee should apply only from the date on which he first made application to the employing authority.

The executive recommended that the view expressed by the appeals committee be approved.

Agreed—that the recommendation be adopted.

New Charter Rulings

Charter Interpretations.—The executive recommended that questions raised by the London district council be answered as indicated below (the answer being printed in italics):

In grading a post, should the "material salary" of an officer be taken as his salary on March 31, 1946, or should an increment due on his former scale on April 1, 1946, be taken into account?—*The material date is March 31, 1946.*

What is the meaning of the N.J.C. minute reading: "It is the intention of the National Joint Council that officers generally on the 1st April, 1946, should enjoy a salary increase and their commencing salary under the national scales should be determined to produce this effect."—*This decision was related to particular circumstances surrounding the adoption of the Charter by East Ham borough council. It was intended to mean that if a post was graded in a grade the maximum of which was in excess of the salary of the officer on March 31, 1946, the salary to be paid under the Charter should be such as to produce an increase on the salary payable as at March 31, 1946.*

In the case of an officer whose maximum under the Charter is

more than the maximum of his salary before April 1, 1946, but whose incremental stages on his old scale give him a temporary benefit, does paragraph 40 (the no-detriment clause) operate so as to give him the benefit of the increments on the old scale until he reaches a point on the new scale at which he will be better off?—*Where a higher salary or progressive higher salary under a former contract of service is preserved to an officer in accordance with paragraph 40, the officer is not entitled to any temporary benefit which may be afforded by the salary scale applicable under the Charter to the grading of the post.*

Agreed—that the answers recommended be approved.

Medical Examination of New Entrants.—In response to a suggestion from Slough corporation that all new entrants to the service should be required to submit to a medical examination, the executive recommended that it was neither necessary nor desirable to amend the Charter in this way, but that the matter should be left to individual local authorities.

Agreed—that the recommendation be approved.

Special Grades.—Suggestions for the grading of supervisors and assistants in the school meals service and of foremen, storekeepers, and similar classes of employees, were referred to the sub-committee on the grading of special classes.

Telephone Operators.—The decision of the executive on March 18, 1947, that a telephone operator was an officer within the meaning of the Charter and should be graded under the salary scales, has been questioned by many local authorities, on the ground that the upper ranges of the general division were out of proportion to the value of the work, and some have refused to grade telephone operators. At one stage, the joint secretaries had suggested, as a solution, that operators engaged in terms of the Charter should be paid in accordance with Charter scales, while operators not so engaged should be paid at special rates to be fixed by local authorities in consultation with the staff representatives, but the executive failed to reach a decision on this proposal. The employers' secretary raised the matter again, and the executive recommended that it be referred to the sub-committee on grading of special classes.

Agreed—that the recommendation be adopted.

Juniors.—Cornwall county council called attention to the difficulty created by the withdrawal from the service for military training of newly-appointed juniors. This made it necessary to appoint a substitute for a period of up to two years. The National Joint Council was, however, opposed to temporary appointments, and Cornwall sought its guidance on the problem.

The joint secretaries suggested that no action by the N.J.C. was called for. The problem was common to all employers, but could not be solved by the appointment of temporary substitutes. Even were it possible to recruit temporary juniors for a limited period—which was unlikely—the practice was one which the N.J.C. should discourage. The committee recommended that the joint secretaries' report be approved.

Agreed—that the recommendation be adopted.

Local Joint Committees.—The executive considered the resolution

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N.E.C Agrees to Service after 65 with Safeguards

THE Association's policy that officers in the local government service should retire on reaching pensionable age to make room for younger men has been modified in response to a recommendation of the Ministry of Labour that, in view of the present manpower situation, the services of elderly workers should not unnecessarily be lost to the country. This was decided by the service conditions and organisation committee of the National Executive Council meeting on January 15.

The Ministry recommended that "there ought not to be a hard-and-fast rule as to the age at which a man should cease work, particularly where this can be done without detriment to the careers of younger persons," and that it seemed desirable that "pension schemes should be reviewed and adjusted where necessary to offer advantages by way of enhanced pension or otherwise in return for postponed retirement."

The committee defined the Association's policy as being that each officer should retire when eligible, but that if he wished to continue work, and his employing authority wished to retain his services, he should be re-engaged from year to year. It recommended further that employing authorities should review the position annually, and that this review should be recognised as a matter for discussion by local joint committees. At the same time, the NALGO representatives on the various joint negotiating bodies will be asked to attempt to ensure that the promotion of younger men is not prejudiced by any schemes adopted, and the law and parliamentary committee is being asked to examine any proposals that might be made for changes in legislation.

Other matters considered by or reported to the committee included:

Size of Branches.—The Association will adhere to its policy of encouraging the formation of large branches. A recent report showed that, of the 87 branches formed in the last four months of 1948, 34 had fewer than 50 members. This meant disproportionately high charges against the Association for travelling and organisation, and the dissipation rather than the concentration of strength against the employers locally.

The creation of large branches with well-informed, active, sub-branches in close contact with each other and with the centre would, it is felt, help to keep costs down and would preserve the virtues of the small branch, including close contact between executive committee and rank and file, speedy dissemination of information, and interest in social activities.

Electricity Consultative Committees.—L. W. G. HETHERINGTON, T. NOLAN and G. A. WHITE will represent the N.E.C. on the newly constituted electricity national consultative committee which will advise the N.E.C. on matters affecting electricity members. Parallel appointments of not more than two members have been made from the N.E.C. to each *district* consultative committee.

Workmen's Tickets.—At an interview with the Railway Executive of the British Transport Commission, the Association's representatives were assured that their view that "workmen's" tickets should not be denied to non-manual workers would be considered. At present non-manual workers may obtain workmen's tickets only when travelling on trains scheduled to reach their destinations before 8 a.m.

Local Government N.J.C.—A. E. ODELL, chairman of the N.E.C. education committee, has been elected to the local government National Joint Council in place of G. C. MARTIN, recently appointed establishment officer to the Midlands Electricity Board.

Charter Adoptions.—Of the 1,530 local authorities in England and Wales, 1,452, or 96.2 per cent have now adopted the Charter in full. Of the 78 who have not yet adopted it, many have no full-time officers, some have adopted similar schemes, and a few—all small ones—have no members of the Association on their staffs and do not, therefore, warrant action by NALGO.

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of last year's NALGO Conference urging that the establishment of properly constituted local joint committees be made mandatory on all employing authorities in the public services. Before reaching a decision, it was agreed to seek information on the extent to which local joint committees were now in operation.

Payment of Increments.—Hornchurch urban district council, supported by the North Metropolitan district council, asked for clarification of the position of an officer appointed to a similar position in another authority. The council asked whether he should be entitled to "carry" his entitlement to increment, in the same way as he may "carry" his entitlement to leave and sickness pay. The executive recommended, however, that, unless the employing authority otherwise determined on appointment, previous service with another authority in a similar position could not be taken into account in determining the entitlement of an officer to an increment in accordance with paragraph 23 (b) of the Charter.

Agreed—that the recommendation be approved.

Inland Revenue Posts for Temporary Rating Valuation Officers and Those over 60

THE Board of Inland Revenue announces that it is prepared to offer unestablished posts in the central rating valuation service to officers of local authorities and assessment committees who are engaged on the professional work of rating valuation but who are ineligible for established posts in the new service either because they are over 60 or because their present posts are not permanent.

The unestablished appointments will, in general, be continued until the revaluation work is finished or until the officer reaches the age of 65, whichever is the earlier date; but the Board may in suitable cases extend an engagement beyond the age of 65. Salary scales will be the same as for the corresponding established grades. The London rates are:

	£	£
Senior Rating Valuer	1,160—	1,370
Rating Valuer, Grade I	900—	1,050
Rating Valuer, Grade II	750—	900
Rating Valuer, Grade III	650—	750
Rating Valuer, Grade IV	500—	650
Valuation Assistant	250—	500

Officers stationed outside London will receive somewhat less than the above scales.

The grade to which an officer is appointed will be a matter of arrangement between the Board and the officer, and will depend on the officer's past experience and grading and on the type of job he is willing to undertake in the new service.

The Board will make every effort to place an unestablished officer in the area of his choice. There will be some 300 local offices. The location of some of these has not been finally settled because of accommodation difficulties, but a complete list will be available nearer the appointed day.

An unestablished officer will be entitled to an annual leave allowance varying from 18 to 24 days, according to grade. He will also be entitled, after a qualifying period of one year, to paid sick leave up to a maximum of three months in any period of twelve months. During the first year of service, paid sick leave will be restricted to a maximum of one week for every month of effective service. The normal hours of duty of unestablished civil servants are 44 a week (including lunch-time). During the present manpower shortage, however, a standard working week of 45¼ hours is in operation. Extra duty allowance (8 per cent. of salary in London and 3 per cent. elsewhere) is payable to officers who work the full hours. The Board will be prepared to arrange for part-time engagements for officers over 60 who prefer to give less than full time.

Unestablished appointments will date from the appointed day or such later date as may be arranged with the officers concerned. The Board is anxious, however, to make arrangements in advance. A number of officers have already applied and the Board would be glad to hear from others who are interested. Such officers should write to the Director of Establishments, Room 59, West Wing, Somerset House, London, W.C.2, if possible not later than July 31, giving the name of their authority, their present salary and grading, and indicating their choice of location. Local authorities have already made returns of staff and their salaries, but it will assist the department if officers will give this information when they apply.

Officers will not be asked to appear before a selection board (except possibly for appointment to the senior rating valuer grade). They will be asked to complete an application form and in due course will have an informal interview with an officer of the department to discuss questions of grading and location.

A memorandum for the information of officers engaged on clerical or typing duties and who are ineligible on age grounds for established posts in the new service will be issued later.

Any officer who wants further information should write to the Director of Establishments at the address given above.

National Health Service Whitley Councils Forge Ahead on Major Issues

THE National Health Service Whitley machine is rapidly getting under way.

The **General Council** is now established and is dealing with the important matters of arbitration and appeals machinery and the establishment of local joint committees.

Every Ministry circular dealing with the salaries or service conditions of officers within the ambit of a particular functional council will in future be supplied in sufficient quantity to enable each member of the staff side to receive a copy. Moreover, the documents will no longer be regarded as confidential and the organisations concerned will be free to publish them at their discretion. These measures should ensure full dissemination of information to the staffs concerned.

Staff side representation on the General Council has, subject to final determination, been fixed as follows:

Administrative and Clerical Staffs' Council	4
Ancillary Staffs' Council ..	4
Nurses' and Midwives' Council	4
Optical Council	3
Professional and Technical Staffs' Council "A" ..	3
Professional and Technical Staffs' Council "B." ..	3
Pharmaceutical Council ..	3

Proposals for a separate Scottish Council have been dropped, but the staff side has agreed to examine the position of each occupational group in Scotland with a view to the possible establishment of a Scottish advisory committee.

Paid Leave for Meetings

At the meeting of the General Council on December 3, the management side agreed in principle that officers attending meetings of Whitley councils—including separate staff side meetings and meetings of committees directly connected with the Whitley councils—should be given paid leave for the purpose, but wished to make the prior consent of the employing authority a necessary condition. The staff side agreed that officers should make formal application to their employing body for leave to attend meetings, but asked that permission should not be unreasonably withheld, and the management side undertook to consult the staff on the terms of a circular to be sent to employing authorities.

Other topics before the meeting included:

Uniformity of pay in England and Wales and in Scotland;

Superannuation rights of certain former L.C.C. officers;

Paid leave to attend interviews for appointments;

Allocation of grades of staff to a particular functional council, failing action by agreement;

The possibility of securing payment of salary in full during sickness instead of National Insurance benefit plus reduced sick pay.

All these matters are to be considered further.

The **Administrative and Clerical Staffs' Council** has agreed to grant equal pay to men and women in the administrative grades. In Scotland, Scottish local government scales of salary are to be applied so as to give equal pay in the A.P.T. grades by raising the women's rates to those of men. Group I scales are to apply throughout the country, irrespective of the grouping of a particular local authority under the Scottish Charter. These concessions have been made without prejudice to future negotiations and to the principle of equal pay throughout the whole of the staffs in England, Scotland and Wales.

The staff side has submitted proposals for the salaries of senior administrative officers of teaching hospitals, hospital management committees (in Scotland, boards of management), and executive councils. NALGO will soon be consulting its members at Regional Board headquarters on the preparation of proposals for senior staffs of the Boards. Proposals in respect of clerical staffs are almost ready for submission to the management side.

The **Nurses & Midwives' Council** has already announced its proposals for student nurses and pupil midwives (October "L.G.S."). The special allowances paid to ex-Service students will continue in respect of those students whose national service began not later than September 30, 1947. The council has been quick to get down to the promised investigation into the conditions of employment in mental hospitals. A special committee has been formed and the staff side proposals, submitted to the first meeting, received unanimous support. A memorandum is now being prepared on the measures needed to give effect to the suggested improvements.

The staff sides of the standing committees of the Council will soon be meeting to consider the proposals of the organisations representing the various grades of nurses, and agreed proposals will then be placed before the management side of the Council.

The two councils representing **Professional and Technical Staffs** are showing much activity. The "A" Council has appointed four committees:

"A"—covering biochemists, hospital physicists and psychologists;

"B"—covering almoners, psychiatric social workers, and speech therapists;

"C"—covering occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and remedial gymnasts;

"D"—covering chiropodists, orthoptists, radiographers, and dietitians.

G. W. PHILLIPS, NALGO's organising officer for health staffs, is staff side chairman of "B" committee.

All the committees are now examining proposals submitted by the various trade unions and professional societies, and every effort is being made to establish a satisfactory salary basis for these groups of officers, many of whom have hitherto been paid much less than was justified by the importance of their work and the standard of qualifications required.

The "B" Council has been equally active. The position in its four committees is as follows:

"A"—Medical laboratory technicians: draft proposals have been prepared and now await final approval by the staff side before being placed before the management side.

"B"—Dental technicians: Progress has been hampered by an unfortunate difference of opinion on the staff side. One organisation, having a larger representation than any other, has apparently made up its mind not only to do nothing itself, but also to prevent the other organisations from doing anything to improve the conditions of dental technicians in public employment. This has led to an impasse, but NALGO's representatives have consulted their dental technician members, and are now preparing proposals for submission to the staff side. Dental technicians may be assured that the unaccountable attitude of one organisation will not be allowed to prejudice their interests.

"C"—dispensers: Proposals have been submitted to the management side with a request for an early meeting of the joint committee.

"D"—hospital engineers: Staff side proposals have been submitted to the management side and a meeting of the joint committee has been held. At this meeting, a small negotiating committee was appointed to discuss staff proposals and to enable the staff side to make further submissions in support of them. These submissions have now been presented.

A **Dental Functional Council** is still not yet in being. The Association has done everything possible to stimulate activity on behalf of public dental officers, but a satisfactory solution of their problems seems to be as far off as ever. Every effort has been made to induce the existing dental organisations to co-operate with the Association to secure a salary for the public dental officer which is reasonably comparable with the earnings of private practitioner dentists, but all approaches have been repulsed. There can be no denial that the present unsatisfactory state of affairs is due to the failure of the dental organisations properly to understand the principles of Whitleyism in their application to the public service and to their failure to grasp the opportunity that was offered last July to form a dental functional council to deal with public dental officers.

The Association recently received, and accepted, an invitation from the secretary of the staff side of the National Joint Council for the local government service to enter into discussions with representatives of the dental organisations, with a view to submitting agreed proposals to the N.J.C. It is understood that similar invitations were sent to the dental organisations, but were rejected.

The Association has never doubted that the best method of fixing the salaries of public dental officers was through a functional council within the national health service Whitley machine, or that the recommendations of the Dental Spens Committee must be the basis upon which such salaries are negotiated. The dental organisations now say that they want a dental functional council. Why, then, do they reject NALGO's proffered help?

Public dental officers, if they are to get a just and equitable settlement, must bestir themselves and insist that the organisations purporting to speak for them really do act in a manner calculated to help and not to hinder.

The Whitley machine is getting down to work, but to be really effective it must have the support of all workers in the national health service. It is the duty of every one of them to join a trade union; and it is the duty of every member of NALGO to see to it that NALGO is that trade union.

Recruitment First Need in Health Service

HEALTH service consultative committees have now been formed in every district. Their chief task at present is to organise recruiting drives amongst the staffs of regional boards and management committees and in the other branches of the health service. Some have been very active, and have found a good response in recruitment and the formation of new branches. Satisfactory as these results are, however, we must stimulate ourselves to greater efforts, for the attainment of good conditions of employment in the national health service largely depends upon efficient trade union organisation.

Those district consultative committees which have not reached maximum activity should act at once, for time is precious.

The organising officer for health staffs has already met several of the committees, and hopes to meet them all in due course. The district officer will do everything possible to assist. Consultative committees—it is up to you!

New Scale for Blood Donor Attendants

The Ministry of Health announces that, from November 1, 1948, the new scale for donor attendants in the blood transfusion service will be £210 x £10—£250 per annum. Donor attendants with three or more years' service should be assimilated to the new scale at their existing salary; others should enter the scale at the minimum.

Also, with effect from November 1, 1948, donor attendants will be entitled to the rates of subsistence allowances set out in paragraphs 5 (ii) of Part III of the Appendix to R.H.B. (47) 7 when working away from their normal headquarters. These rates were set out in "L.G.S." for September, 1948 (p. 182).

Regional Hospital Boards have been asked to put the new salary scale and rates of subsistence allowances into operation, with retrospective effect, as soon as possible.

The Ministry had previously announced that staffs in the blood transfusion service, other than clerical and typing staffs, laboratory technicians, and domestic workers, should be reappointed on the salary scales and conditions to which they were entitled before July 5, 1948.

Valuation Talks Deadlock—Minister's Reply to Negotiating Committee

We published last month a summary of the statement prepared by the negotiating committee of local government rating valuation staffs, explaining the history of its negotiations with the Board of Inland Revenue over the new centralised valuation service to be set up under the Local Government Act, 1948, and stating that those negotiations had reached deadlock as the result of "profound disagreement" between the committee and the Board.

A copy of the full statement was sent to Mr. W. GLENVIL HALL, M.P., Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and he has sent a long reply. It was impossible to arrange a meeting of the negotiating committee to consider this before this number of "L.G.S." went to press, but the members of the committee agreed that, as a matter of courtesy, Mr. Hall's reply should be published immediately, without comment. It therefore appears in full below. The side-headings are our own.

I HAVE read with great interest the statement by the negotiating committee of the local government officers. I should like to say at the beginning that I am most appreciative of the time and thought which the members of the committee have given to the problems of the new rating valuation organisation. It is quite incorrect to assume that these efforts have not been productive. On the contrary, many of the suggestions which the committee have put forward have been of great value to the Board of Inland Revenue. The Board's officers who conducted the negotiations would be the first to acknowledge the very real help they have received from the committee.

Priority in Appointments

I find that at the first meeting on 10th December, 1947, the Revenue representatives gave an assurance that all competent officers engaged on rating valuation work with local authorities or assessment committees would be considered for the new service before any other sources of recruitment were tapped. The implementation of this assurance has not been without its difficulties, and I think that local government officers should be reminded of its value to them.

After the first meeting, the Board's representatives met the negotiating committee on the 7th and 27th January and the consultative sub-committee on 2nd February. No further meetings were held until 8th June, because the department was engaged in issuing the questionnaire to local authorities which had been drawn up in consultation with the sub-committee, in collating the replies, in studying the memorandum which had been submitted in January by the sub-committee, and in drafting preliminary proposals for the new organisation.

Nothing Lost by Delay

The negotiating committee complain that during this period, they did not have an opportunity of discussing their memorandum. But nothing was lost through the lack of discussion; for the Revenue proposals on the organisation of the new service were quite in harmony with the proposals in paragraph 6 of the memorandum, except that the Revenue did not agree to separation of the new service from the Valuation Office and that they proposed the centralisation of work on special properties.

On the first of these two points of disagreement, I have myself received a deputation. On the second, inter alia, the Revenue have met the sub-committee on several occasions since June and have made it clear that, while experienced staff must be centralised for the work on special properties, in order to save man-power, it may be expedient and desirable in certain areas to leave special properties in the hands of the local officer.

FIVE POINTS OF DISAGREEMENT

The five points upon which the negotiating committee recorded its profound disagreement with the Inland Revenue department, and to which Mr. Glenvil Hall refers were:

(i) The proposal to operate rating valuation as an adjunct to the existing valuation office under the control of the chief valuer of that office.

(ii) The low levels in the valuation office scales at which the department apparently purposes placing valuation officers and their staffs.

(iii) The undue emphasis being placed on the level of existing salaries in relation to the work of rating valuation, as it will arise under the Act.

(iv) The proposals for segregating classes of the work and limiting the valuation functions of the local valuation officer which arise from the general lack of proper recognition of the statutory responsibilities of that officer.

(v) The reluctance to settle the principle of ultimate seniority before recruitment.

As discussions continued, it became clear that the differences of substance between the committee and the Board centred round pay. Indeed, the points of disagreement summarised in paragraph 16 of the committee's statement comprise the two matters referred to above together with three questions which, directly or indirectly, are pay questions.

In paragraph 16 (ii), the committee complain that the Board are under-grading the work. I suggest that the committee should reserve judgment until they see in more detail what the transferred officers will be asked to do. The Board, for their part, have made a sincere attempt to grade the work in comparison with other professional branches of the civil service.

In connection with (iii), the committee will realise that, had their original proposal for the bulk transfer of staff been accepted, the transfer would have been at the existing level of salaries. Moreover, the terms of the recent recruitment of local authorities' staff to the Ministry of National Insurance and the Assistance Board required that no officer could be recruited to a grade higher than that which most nearly corresponded in salary to his local authority grading. I should have expected the committee to find some satisfaction in the discretion which the Board's proposals allow to the Civil Service Selection Boards.

Point (v) was raised fairly recently. The Board have invited the sub-committee to put forward their views on the seniority, inter se, of transferred officers, but have not yet received any proposals. The question of ultimate seniority will involve negotiations with the valuation office staff associations as well as with the negotiating committee. Moreover, it is difficult, if not impossible, to make any practical proposals on the question of seniority in the integrated office in advance of the whole question of the organisation and grading of that office.

We have failed to reach agreement on these points, not because the Board's officers did not negotiate or had no powers to negotiate, as the committee allege, but because the committee put forward some claims which were unacceptable. On the general question of organisation, however, the Board have adopted much of what the committee proposed and, as I have said earlier, I am very grateful for the help which the committee have given us.

"Will Receive Fair Deal"

I am quite confident that the members of the staff associations need have no hesitation in joining the new service. In it, they will find a job worth doing, and they will receive a fair deal from the Board of Inland Revenue not only in the general conditions of service, but in the matter of salary also.

I am grateful to the negotiating committee for sending me a copy of their statement, and I have no doubt that they will wish to give my reply the same publicity as they have given to the statement itself.

Improved Terms of Appointment for Valuation Panel Staff

IN response to representations by the Negotiating Committee for the rating valuation service, the Ministry of Health has agreed to a number of improvements in the proposals for terms and conditions of appointment of staff of local valuation panels, which were reported in the December "L.G.S." (page 245).

The representations were agreed at meetings of the negotiating committee held on November 2 and 25. They:

Declared the proposed salaries to be inadequate, particularly as, in many cases, existing salaries exceeded the maxima of the proposed grades;

Drew attention to the qualifications required of the clerk of a panel and the nature of his duties;

Suggested that, to attract experienced and capable officers of assessment committees to the valuation panels, the range of salaries for the clerks in various grades should be in keeping with the responsibilities of the office;

Disagreed with the classification of areas on the basis of the number of hereditaments; and

Submitted that the lowest salary grade for full-time clerks should be £650-£800 and the highest £1,450-£1,600, and that the salary grades for deputy and assistant clerks should be:

	Min. £	Max. £
Grade A Deputy Clerk	725	900

(Individual consideration, on merits, for very large areas.)

	£	£
Grade B Assistant Clerk	550	700
Grades C & D Assistant Clerks	425	550

It was further submitted that the principle of voluntary negotiation between employers and employees should not be prejudiced.

Discussions on the representations took place with Mr. A. E. Hickinbotham at the Ministry on December 22, NALGO being represented by the president, P. H. HARROLD, and the legal officer, W. C. ANDERSON. The result of the discussions may be summarised as follows:—

1. The Ministry is to review the upper limits of the proposed salaries, the deputation having made out a good case for this to be done.
2. The Ministry is to consider extensions of salary scales in relation to joint appointments and larger areas.
3. The salary to be paid to the lowest paid assistant is to be reconsidered, the deputation having made the point that the maximum of that salary (£360) is less than the maximum of the general division in local government.
4. Further consideration is to be given to the salary payable for part-time appointments.
5. It is agreed that the proposed scales do not exclude payment of special remuneration for an abnormal amount of work in connection with a quinquennial valuation. This matter, however, is to be left in abeyance until the event happens.
6. Officers appointed will not necessarily be placed on the minimum of the proposed scale.
7. The deputation is to provide facts supporting its view that there will be as much work to be dealt with by the panels as there is by existing assessment committees.

NALGO SEEKS SUPERANNUATION IMPROVEMENTS

Local Authorities Call for Higher Contributions to Meet Rising Costs

COMPREHENSIVE proposals for improvements in the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, governing the pension rights of local government officers, have been submitted by NALGO to representatives of the local authorities. The representatives have undertaken to examine them and to consider, in the light of actuarial advice, how far they can recommend the associations of local authorities to accept them.

The proposals, as now submitted, are:

1 **All wholetime officers of all local authorities, including such authorities as are not mentioned in Part 1 of the First Schedule to the 1937 Superannuation Act, to be compulsorily superannuable.**

2 **Unmarried or widowed officer to be able to provide pension for dependant.**

3 **Officer who has qualified for a superannuation allowance to be able to surrender a portion without ceasing to hold his employment.**

4 **Indirect service, including service as an articled pupil, to be reckonable automatically as non-contributing service; war service of an officer who left the employment of an officer of a local authority so to serve to be reckonable as non-contributing service.**

5 **Supplementary teacher to be entitled to reckon previous service in non-provided schools.**

6 **Previous employment with a magistrate's clerk to be reckoned as non-contributing service.**

7 **Clarification of superannuation rights of staff of clerk of the peace where that office is separated from that of clerk of the county council.**

8 **Sixtieths for non-contributing service.**

9 **Option for existing contributors similar to that open to local health authority staffs under paragraph 40 (1) of the National Health Service (Superannuation) Regulations, 1947 and 1948.**

10 **Provision similar to paragraph 4 (4) National Health Service (Superannuation) Regulations so that a period of illness without pay shall rank as contributing service.**

11 **Section 16 of the 1937 Act to be applied to the following grades of female staff of children's home—matrons, assistant matrons, foster and house mothers and assistants, nursery nurses and attendants, and all female staff in analogous posts wholly engaged upon and in attendance upon children (excluding domestic staffs).**

12 **Provision similar to section 59, Edinburgh Corporation Order, 1933, to allow an officer, whose entry into the local government service after attaining the age of 25 years is due to his having obtained professional, technical, or other special qualifications, to make payments so that a number of years not exceeding ten shall be added to his superannuable service.**

13 **Amend section 16 (2) so that a nurse who exercised the option under section 16 (1), and whose service is extended beyond the age of 60, shall be excused contributions in respect of the period of extended service or shall be entitled to further pensionable rights.**

14 **Contributions to be returnable in all cases of resignation or dismissal, whether there is misconduct or not.**

15 **Widow to receive pension automatically and not by surrender of superannuation allowance—as in the National Health Service (Superannuation) Regulations.**

16 **Amend section 11 so that a local authority may be empowered to grant:**

(a) under section 11 (1), a gratuity not exceeding two years' remuneration to the widow or dependants of a deceased employee;

(b) under section 11 (2), a gratuity to an employee who is not a contributory employee and who ceases to be employed in consequence of his being permanently incapacitated by an injury sustained in the actual discharge of his duty and without his own default;

(c) under section 11 (2), a gratuity to the widow or dependants of an employee (whether a contributory employee or not) who dies as the result of an injury sustained in the discharge of his duties.

No Addition to Rates

On July 29, 1947, the general secretary wrote to the local authority associations and to the London County Council indicating NALGO's desire to discuss with them proposals for amendment of the 1937 Act which it had prepared and had discussed with officers of the Ministry of Health. The associations and the L.C.C. expressed their willingness to enter into discussions, and appointed representatives, but difficulty was experienced in fixing a mutually convenient date.

Eventually, a meeting was held on April 20, 1948. NALGO was represented by P. H. HARROLD, L. H. TAYLOR, W. ROWLANDS and the legal officer. Representatives of the Association of Municipal Corporations, County Councils' Association, London County Council, Urban District Councils' Association, Rural District Councils' Association, Metropolitan Boroughs Standing Joint Committee, and the Association of Counties and Cities in Scotland attended.

Expressing their view that employees were not making a fair contribution to the rising cost of pensions, the local authority representatives emphasised at the outset that their consideration of any of the proposals was on the understanding that there must be a general investigation into superannuation provisions, including the adequacy of the contributions at present paid to superannuation funds; and that no additional burden to rate-borne expenditure was likely to be acceptable to local authorities. Whatever else was decided at the meeting, therefore, they declared, was subject to the caveat that the question of increasing the employees' contributions must be considered. It was added that the County Councils' Association had intended to raise this point with the Ministry even had NALGO not submitted proposals for amendment of the Act.

Earlier Retirement Excluded

The local authority representatives then pointed out that some of the NALGO proposals had the effect of grafting on to the 1937 Act the most favourable provisions in other legislation, without any corresponding adjustment for the beneficiary to bear the cost, and stated that it was unlikely that the employers would be prepared to adopt only those provisions which were favourable to employees. They added that they were not prepared to enter into any discussions on the following proposals:

That an officer should have the right to retire on superannuation at the age of 60, irrespective of his length of service, women officers having the option to retire at 55.

That an officer should have the right to retire on a superannuation allowance of 40/60ths on completing 40 years' service before attaining age 60.

The remainder of the proposals were referred to a sub-committee composed of representatives of each body represented at the meeting, Mr. Harrold and the legal officer being appointed NALGO's representatives. A representative of the Association of County Councils in Scotland was added to the sub-committee later.

The sub-committee met on June 30 and November 25, 1948, to consider the proposals in detail. On June 30 it was suggested that, instead of proceeding with proposals for incorporating into the 1937 Act the National Health Service superannuation provisions relating to widows' and dependants' pensions and death gratuity, NALGO should consider the possibility of giving employees an option to take the whole of the new National Health Service provisions or the 1937 Act.

This was considered by the law and parliamentary committee of the National Executive Council, and, on November 25, the NALGO representatives suggested that a right of option be given to existing contributory employees and local Act contributors similar to that given to nursing, medical, and allied staffs of local health authorities by para. 40 (1) of the National Health Service (Superannuation) Regulations.

Seeking Actuarial Advice

After lengthy discussions, during which the desire of the local authorities to have the question of increasing the employees' contributions considered was again stressed, it was arranged that NALGO should submit all its proposals as they appeared in the light of the discussions so far held. The local authorities' representatives would then consider them with a view to ascertaining how far they could recommend acceptance to their associations, and would take such actuarial advice as they considered necessary.

The proposals have now been submitted, in the form set out above.

It was further suggested that the following proposals, submitted by NALGO, should be referred to the Ministry of Health, for such action as it thought advisable, for example, consultation with local Act authorities:

1. Reckoning of previous service "lost" under the provisions of local Act schemes.
2. Section 16 of the 1937 Act to be applied to nurses, midwives and health visitors employed by local Act authorities.
3. Section 16 of the 1937 Act to apply to local Act authorities whose schemes do not provide for widows' pensions.

Ministry's Reply

These proposals were submitted to the Ministry. On the first, it replied that the point had been considered when the 1937 Act was in course of preparation, and it was then decided that, although the Act should put matters right for the future, there would be no concession in respect of the past. The Ministry did not feel justified in re-opening the question.

The second point, it felt, had been covered by the National Health Service superannuation regulations, and it suggested that it was premature to consider the third point pending the result of the consideration by the local authorities' associations of the widows' pensions proposal submitted by NALGO.

NALGO Exams. in May

APPLICATION to sit for the next NALGO examinations, to be held on May 18, 19, and 20, must be made on the prescribed form and received by the general secretary not later than March 1. The examination centres will be selected in April

New Electricity Sick-Pay Scale Improves on Charter

A COMPREHENSIVE sick-pay scheme—the first permanent feature of the scheme of conditions of service for electricity administrative and clerical staff—was adopted by the electricity National Joint Council on January 18. It will take effect from July 5 last.

Although the scheme is based largely on local authorities' and old National Joint Board schemes, it allows more favourable periods of sick leave in the early years of an officer's service (giving the maximum allowance after only five year's service—five years less than under the local government Charter), and provides that all continuous service with an electricity board or its predecessors shall count towards his entitlement to paid sick leave.

The scheme was first discussed by a co-ordinating committee of representatives of the National Joint Council and National Joint Board, which recommended its acceptance by both bodies. This committee will now proceed to discuss holidays, subsistence allowances, and other conditions of service.

A detailed draft of the scheme will shortly be circulated, but its main provisions are as follows:

The scale of allowances will be:

Months of Continuous Service	*Months of Sick Pay Full*	*Half*
Not exceeding 4	1	—
From 4 to 12	1	2
,, 12 to 24	2	2
,, 24 to 36	3	3
,, 36 to 48	4	4
,, 48 to 60	5	5
Over 60	6	6

In calculating an employee's entitlement to sick leave, the aggregate of the periods for which he received sick pay during the twelve months immediately preceding the first day of absence will be deducted from the allowance due under the above table. Twenty-six days (which will include Saturdays) will be reckoned as one month.

The full amount of national insurance sickness benefit, injury benefit, and compensation payments will be deducted from full pay, but there will be no deductions from half pay unless the amount of full pay would thereby be exceeded, when the appropriate adjustment will be made. No deductions will be made in respect of voluntary contributors under the old scheme during the 26 weeks commencing July 5 last. Married women who opt not to contribute to the national insurance scheme and in respect of whom a Board still has to pay its contribution, will have deducted the amount of sickness benefit which would have been payable had they decided to contribute.

If an employee is sick during annual leave and produces a medical certificate, the period so covered will be regarded as sick leave and not as annual leave.

Boards may consider extending the period of paid sick leave in serious cases, and the Council has agreed that a trade union may, if it is not satisfied that adequate consideration has been given to such a case, make representations, if necessary "at the highest level."

It is understood that, whilst it is impracticable to include in the scheme a clause to this effect, Boards may use their discretion in respect of odd days of sickness for which it is not considered desirable to consult a doctor and in respect of which sickness benefit cannot therefore be claimed, although it would otherwise have been payable.

Other matters discussed and decisions reached by the Council included:

Grading of Private Secretaries.—It was considered desirable not to introduce special interim scales for private secretaries, but to offer them provisional grading in grades A and B (provincial salary ranges of £270-£450 and £450-£550 respectively) of the extended interim scheme of salaries and service conditions.

Grades A and B are defined as covering staff engaged in legal, accounting, secretarial, or other work comparable with that covered by a professional institute, whether qualified or not, and who do not hold a supervisory position (Grade B applying only to staff whose duties entail a substantial measure of individual initiative or responsibility).

No private secretary shall be offered less than she would have received if paid in accordance with the interim shorthand-typists' scale.

Application of Clerical Scale.—Difficulties have arisen in the application of the interim general clerical scale. The Boards considered that officers should be transferred to it when their salary for age on the interim scale equalled or exceeded their salary for age on their existing scale. The staff side, however, considered that they should be transferred to the interim scale only when the salary it would provide exceeded their existing scale. A clause was therefore inserted providing for the payment for one year of any higher salary which would have been paid to the officer on his existing scale by virtue of an increment due on or before March 31 next.

The exact terms of the resolution are:

1. Subject to the provisions of clause two (below), an employee whose rate on an existing salary scale is in excess of the interim general clerical scale shall not be transferred to the interim scale until the salary for his age on the interim scale is equal to or in excess of the salary for the same age on the existing salary scale.

2. If an employee would have received during the year ending March 31, 1949, a higher salary under his existing scale by reason of an increment, he shall receive such higher salary for a period of twelve months.

The same procedure will be followed for typists' and shorthand-typists' scales, and it has been agreed that, if there should be unexpected delay in the introduction of permanent scales, the question may be re-opened.

Introduction of 38-hour Week.—At least one Area Board considered that staff previously working more than 38 hours a week should continue to do so unless the B.E.A. interim scheme of salaries and conditions of service were adopted. It was agreed, however, that the 38-hour week shall apply to *all* staff covered by the N.J.C. except those "allocated" to other hours as a condition of employment. Staff so allocated will be restricted to those whose duties demand it, and the staff side may make representations to the Council in cases where it considers the working of such hours to be unjustified.

LEGAL AID AND ADVICE
A Warning to Members

Members of NALGO can get free legal aid and advice from Headquarters on matters arising out of their employment, and the Association accepts responsibility for the costs of any case adopted, subject to the member's branch approving his application for assistance.

There have been cases recently where members have instructed local solicitors to act on their behalf, and have then applied to NALGO for assistance because they find that they cannot afford the cost.

Members are notified, therefore, that to gain maximum benefit they must consult Headquarters before consulting local solicitors, otherwise they may find that the Association either will not assist at all or else will accept responsibility only for costs incurred after Headquarters has agreed that assistance shall be given.

NALGO wants:

Administrative Assistant for Education

Applications are invited for the position of administrative assistant in the Association's education department. The appointment will be on the Association's salary scale APT.11—£460 × £15—£505.

The post requires administrative ability. Some experience of part-time study and/or knowledge of adult education will be an advantage. The appointment will be subject to medical examination and will be to the permanent establishment, carrying the rights of admission to the Staff Superannuation Fund on terms, particulars of which will be supplied on request to intending applicants. The appointment will be subject to one month's notice on either side, and the person appointed will be required to devote the whole of his or her time to the duties of the office.

No form of application is being issued. Applicants should state age, past and present appointments, qualifications and experience, should give the names of two persons to whom reference may be made, and must be received by the General Secretary, 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1, not later than March 1, 1949.

Canvassing will be a disqualification.

(Continued from last column)

the promotion examination but fails in Welsh may take Welsh at the next succeeding examination on payment of an entry fee of 10s. 6d."

Candidates who had entered for the other parts of the examination by January 31 will be allowed to offer Welsh at the 1949 examination provided they notify the Board before March 1. It should be emphasised that Welsh is an optional subject, and that candidates must take the normal five subjects whether or not they offer Welsh.

EDUCATION NOTES

DUTCH SUMMER SCHOOL
March 14 Last Date for Reservations

SINCE 33 members have already expressed their desire to take part in a NALGO Summer School in Holland, the education committee is going ahead with its plans to hold one there. The Dutch Institute of Administrative Sciences has booked "Drakenburgh," a conference centre near Hilversum, for the week May 14-21. Present plans visualise morning lectures, afternoon visits to Dutch institutions, and some all-day excursions.

Although students will be required to share rooms—which vary in size, accommodating two, four, seven, fourteen, or twenty members—the accommodation is reputed to be good. Women students will be welcomed. The cost—including fare, but not excursions—will be £15, and reservations must reach Headquarters by March 14.

For the Oxford summer school, to be held at Oriel College from July 2 to 9, an interesting programme of lectures is being prepared, and 41 places have already been booked. The second English school will be announced as soon as firm arrangements can be made. In the meantime, members wishing to attend either of these schools should notify Headquarters at once.

The education committee has decided that each student shall pay a non-returnable reservation fee of £1 1s.

International Exchanges

Encouraging replies to our suggestion that exchange visits between local government officers might be arranged have been received from Holland, Denmark, and Sweden. Members interested should write to Headquarters.

Promotion Examination

University College, Hull, has amended its D.P.A. regulations to exempt candidates who have passed the promotion examination from the requirement that they must first have matriculated.

The Local Government Examinations Board has decided to include Welsh as an additional, optional subject in the promotion examination. The approved syllabus is:

"A short essay in Welsh, a choice being allowed between a number of subjects. Comprehension of a given Welsh passage, report or correspondence. Precis. Questions to test the candidates' ability to use Welsh words, sentences, and idioms correctly. Translation into English of a Welsh passage. Translation into Welsh of an English passage. Candidates will be given an opportunity of showing what general reading they have done in Welsh literature, but no texts will be prescribed for study. (All answers to be written in Welsh unless otherwise stated.)"

Regulation 3 has been amended by the addition of the following:

"A candidate may also at the same examination be examined in Welsh. The work of the candidate in the Welsh paper will not be taken into account in determining the result of the examination. A candidate who passes in Welsh but fails in the promotion examination as a whole will be credited with that success. A candidate who passes

(Continued at foot of column 3)

READERS' FORUM

Call for Electricity Salaries Policy with £7 Minimum at 26

IN his article in the January journal, Mr. Moser tells us that NALGO represents more than 80 per cent. of all clerical and administrative staffs in the electricity supply industry. Therefore, when discussing the achievements of the National Joint Council, we are entitled to take most of the credit. Equally, we shall be held responsible for any shortcomings in the scales and service conditions negotiated.

In considering the prospects of members, we must bear in mind the Government White Paper on Personal Incomes, Costs, and Prices; and Government policy to use the nationalised industries as a source of cheap fuel and power and so make the rest of industry more competitive.

Experience has shown that, although, in the past, supporters of nationalisation stressed the improvement of working conditions as well as increased efficiency, present policy opposes any fresh improvements on grounds of cost. There is a danger that this argument may be used not only to prevent the introduction of certain overdue reforms—such as equal pay—but also to attack present standards. It is difficult to see on what grounds, other than cost, the Boards' representatives on the N.J.C. opposed payment for overtime.

If such attempts are made, our representatives must make it clear that we regard electricity as one of the key industries in the national economy, contributing directly to industrial efficiency and higher productivity. We will help to increase efficiency, but in return we shall expect salaries and conditions commensurate with the importance of the industry and the responsibilities involved. As a minimum, these standards must not be inferior to the Charter.

Mr. Moser invites comment on the problems facing us. I would like to make four points:

1. The importance of ensuring that information "from the top" is speedily conveyed to every member. Whatever the reason, it is a fact that not one branch in the S.W. district was aware of the "negative" agreement on overtime until advised by the S.W. Electricity Board at the end of November, although the agreement was made four months before.

2. If the Boards' representatives are opposed to a prolonged wage-for-age scale, they should be prepared to concede £7 a week at 26, to attract the right type of entrant to the industry. This would give a reasonable basic wage to everyone and provide an opportunity for the "bright boys" to advance to a higher grade at an earlier age.

3. We are told that the extended interim scheme for salaries is intended to provide information on which suitable final scales can be based. But many wonder why a scheme could not have been devised on lines broadly similar to the Charter, thus avoiding the necessity of placing the ex-municipal staffs in the new scales, and making it easier to place ex-company staffs at suitable points in the appropriate grade. Since, however, new scales have been negotiated, it is incumbent upon the area boards to apply them satisfactorily. Instead, in this area, the gradings have been so made as to make some of the staff suspect that an attempt is being made to "down-grade" them. Was this done, we wonder, to ensure wholesale rejections and so put on the staff the onus for failure to implement the scheme satisfactorily?

4. Is there any reason why the National Electricity Consultative Committee should not formulate a salary and service conditions policy based on past experience of local government and the negotiations since nationalisation, and circulate it to branches and to the district consultative committees for discussion before entering negotiations for the final scheme?

C. R. GIBSON.

21, Briavels Grove, Bristol, 6.

Once again we must apologise to the many readers whose letters could not be published for lack of space. Letters for the March journal must reach the Editor, 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1, by February 14. They should be written or typed (double space) on one side of the paper only and must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters for reasons of space.

The Boards' members of the N.J.C. objected to payment for overtime to administrative and clerical staff on principle, not because of the cost. The staff side does not accept that principle and will challenge it when final scales are negotiated. The extended interim scheme was negotiated on August 11 and its details were published in the September "L.G.S." It was then announced that staff covered by the "general clerical scale" would be eligible for overtime payment. There is no evidence of any area board trying to avoid correct application of the scheme. Of course, employers' ideas of grading may differ from ours—as they did when the local government Charter was applied. That is why appeals procedure was provided — and NALGO will no doubt use it as effectively as it did in the local government field.

GAS STAFFS' CHARTER
Now for Uniformity!

WHILST thanking you for the good work accomplished in formulating the gas staffs' Charter scales, we see before us a much greater task in obtaining uniformity of their application.

It appears that managements are grading their staffs in the light of their previous salaries, instead of grading the job, thus contravening the spirit if not the letter of the Charter.

I hope that officials who think they have been victims of this grading system will put their cases forward, and that NALGO will set the necessary machinery going to hear these appeals, which, I predict, will be many.

"MR. THERM."

VALUATION DEADLOCK
Plight of Transferees

THE report of the negotiating committee on the negotiations with the Inland Revenue Department over the new centralised valuation service in the January journal makes sorry reading for rating valuation staffs.

The treatment received by the committee fully justifies its conclusion that it is not regarded by the Inland Revenue as a negotiating body. The inference is that, for all practical purposes, it has ceased to function. Is that treatment to be accepted by an organisation like NALGO without protest? No suggestion appears in "L.G.S." that further action is contemplated, but surely things cannot be left as they are.

Officers employed solely on valuation work will have no place in local government and will have to accept employment with the Inland Revenue on the conditions laid down by the Board, despite the fact that "L.G.S." describes them as "unacceptable." Such officers will become the "poor relations" in the valuation department, with inferior salary scales and the possibility that, in a few years, they may be regarded as junior to much younger and comparatively inexperienced men recruited direct to the department, their years of local government service airily waved aside.

"R. V. O."

The question of seniority is to be discussed later—see P. 295. But it is incorrect to argue that ex-local government officers will be the "poor relations in the valuation department, with inferior salary scales." The scales are those applicable to the civil service generally. The dispute is over the contention that these scales are inadequate for a specialised service.

"Approach was Wrong"

THE members of the Kingston-upon-Hull valuation department endorse the letter from "N. A. V." in the January "L.G.S." The negotiating committee has failed, but suggests no way out of the deadlock. We feel, that the approach was wrong, that they laid too much stress upon general matters, and that the problems of the individual were overlooked. We lay the blame for this upon NALGO. Other associations, as well as being members of the negotiating committee, made direct approaches to the Government representatives to discuss their own affairs, and achieved a certain amount of success.

NALGO claims to be a powerful instrument of negotiation. In our opinion, strong and resolute action was never more necessary than at present. It is reasonable to assume that, of the 1,600 officers concerned, large numbers are seriously perturbed as to their future. Therefore, we urge NALGO to take the matter up independently of any other association and ascertain the feelings of members throughout the country preparatory to a high-level approach to the Government.

"20 MORE N. A. V.s."

There does not appear to be any way out of the deadlock. When the negotiating committee met Mr. Glenvil Hall on July 29, he said that the proposed salary scales were, in fact, the civil service scales already in force in the Inland Revenue department, and that he was unable to indicate that there would be any increase in the scales offered, since that would upset the existing balance in the civil service and cause repercussions.

It is not true that "the problems of the individual were overlooked," nor that "other associations . . . made direct approaches to the Government representatives in order to discuss their own affairs, and achieved a certain amount of success." The only association which made a unilateral approach was the Incorporated Association of Rating and Valuation Officers, who endeavoured to secure full recognition of the A.R.V.O. examination qualification in the new rating valuation service. The association regarded this as a domestic problem and the negotiating committee agreed that the I.A.R.V.O. should handle it independently. It is known to be extremely disappointed with the results of its efforts and has registered "strong dissatisfaction." Apart from this, the constituent members of the negotiating committee have, from the start, appreciated the value of concerted action and have agreed to act togeiher.

We suggest that rating valuation staffs, instead of criticising the negotiating committee's efforts, should appreciate that it has done its best in extremely difficult circumstances. Its efforts may yet be reflected in the grading of the posts offered. The statement reported on page 270 of the January "L.G.S" should not be construed as an apology; it was intended to inform members of the difficulties which had been encountered, and the attempts made to overcome them.

Assessment Committee Clerks

THE relevant points in the letter from "N.A.V." in the January journal will receive the support of rating valuation staffs throughout the country, and prompt me to draw attention to another aspect of the problem—the position of whole-time clerks of assessment committees.

Under the Local Government Act, 1948 assessment committees will soon be superseded by local valuation panels, and, even if the present clerks secure appointments with these new bodies, they will be offered commencing salaries ranging from £550 to £750 p.a. according to the number of hereditaments in the panel area. In almost every case this is going to mean a loss of remuneration, serious in some instances, to the officers concerned, for which loss they will not receive fair and adequate compensation under the 1948 regulations.

During this interim period before the appointed day, many clerks will seek to leave the service for appointments offering remuneration commensurate with their experience and qualifications. Thereby invaluable knowledge will be lost to the new panels and to the new rating valuation service as a whole.

I pay tribute to the noble efforts being made by NALGO in co-operation with the Society of Clerks of Assessment Committees, the Incorporated Association of Rating and Valuation officers and other professional bodies.

CECIL H. EVANS.

49, East Street, Chichester.

Clerk to the Chichester area assessment committee and Vice-chairman, London and Home Counties branch of the Society of Clerks of Assessment Committees.

As the report on page 295 shows, these questions are under discussion.

EQUAL PAY AGAIN
"A Closed Issue for NALGO"

I SHOULD have thought that, as far as NALGO was concerned, equal pay was no longer a matter for controversy. The principle has been accepted by the Association for some years and the findings of the Royal Commission with regard to the civil service and local government have amply endorsed our attitude. That being so, I am puzzled that "Critic" should try to drag the whole issue into the arena of debate and polemics again.

The N.E.C. has rejected a Conference instruction for a national campaign for rates of pay comparable to those in the banks and insurance houses. No satisfactory solution has yet been found to the vexed question of Charter anomalies. These issues alone should provide NALGO with enough work and research to satisfy the most indefatigable.

Moreover, the new negotiating bodies for the nationalised services, now engaged in fixing wage scales, are finding it difficult enough to move the other side on women's rates without having to overcome disloyal sniping from the sidelines by "Critic." This sort of article, regurgitating all the stale and fishy prejudices to which we have had to listen for years, is grist to the mill of our opponents. It gives them grounds for supposing that NALGO is not united behind the women and encourages them to stiffen their necks when we ask for equality.

"Critic" asks for an inquiry. The Royal Commission sat for two years and sifted huge volumes of evidence. Before it reported, NALGO claimed that equal pay was an act of common justice. The Commission's report endorsed that claim. What more do we want? Only the other day, the General Assembly of the United Nations emblazoned equal pay for equal work as one of the fundamental rights of man. Are we to ignore all this to suit the petty prejudices of "Critic" and his friends?

This should be a closed issue as far as NALGO is concerned. What we should be agitating ourselves about is how we can get the powers that be to implement the findings of the Royal Commission. To do that we need an impressive display of united strength.

TOM FERNLEY.
Gas Department, Town Hall,
Manchester.

"Meaningless Slogan"

THE expression "equal pay for equal work" has no logical or constructive meaning. It is time, as Critic says, "that NALGO which has paid lip service to the slogan for years . . . . cleared its mind of cant and examined the question seriously."

F. W. COOPER.
66, Lindridge Road,
Sutton Coldfield.

HIGHER PAY CAMPAIGN
N.E.C. Policy Under Fire

WHAT is the N.E.C. coming to? It resisted the demand for regarding the Charter as a minimum; it has been lukewarm on equal pay; and now it is temporising with the instruction of Conference that it should begin at once a strong campaign for higher pay.

Red herrings are wrapped in a White Paper and those in the lower reaches of the Charter are left to freeze till they are blue around the gills. The eminence of Grade VIII and over no doubt accounts for the equanimity with which the majority of the members of the N.E.C. appear to regard the effects of wage-freezing. Unfortunately, for those low down in the Charter scales, it is tough going. Let me remind the N.E.C. that, in London, in the general division, the married man aged 25 with one child commands a net weekly salary of £5 9s., which, when he is 26, rises to the magnificent sum of £5 15s. Even the London bus conductor gets a basic weekly wage of £6 9s.

On the basis of the Government's wage-freezing policy, the N.E.C. spokesmen make a case that is superficially convincing. But it means nothing to the housewife who has to manage on the G.D. level of income.

In the household budget, the more that must be allocated to necessities the less there is available for relaxations. Surely the national budget could be similarly rearranged without increasing either the costs of production or imperilling the outcome of the battle of the gap? For instance, according to Command Paper 7,099, 1947, the national income in 1946 was mainly comprised of rent, £386 millions; interest and profits, £2,370 millions; salaries, £1,675 millions; and wages, £3,020 millions. If a de-freezing process could be applied to the first two groups, the way would be clear to benefit the last two groups, without creating another of those vicious spirals of which we are told to beware.

In the same way as an applied pressure will melt ice, the pressure of a strong campaign will bring about that relative change in incomes that the rank and file members know is necessary to safeguard the wage differential required both to maintain their own standard of living and to attract to the local government service personnel of the calibre considered desirable. The responsibility of the N.E.C. is to bring the full pressure of NALGO into play and not to divert it into alternative channels.

I thank you for providing this insight into the high policy discussions of the N.E.C., but I ask that the division lists be published. After all, N.E.C. representatives are always reminding us that we have elected them to their high estate and rhetorically asserting that we have full freedom to change them if we are dissatisfied. Let them provide the opportunity by allowing names to be published to show where they stand in relation to this important Conference decision.

N. E. London F. NEWMAN.
Electricity Branch.

"Maximum at 25"

THE cry for new blood in the local government service will not be heeded whilst a manual worker at 21 draws a full wage packet of £5 or £6 a week. Bring the maximum down to 25, and give local government juniors a fighting chance to compete with others. I for one, wish to marry before 32. But what are the chances at £220 a year?

"21, AND STILL HOPEFUL."

"Take off the Kid Gloves"

YOUR reply to Mr. Victor Foster in the January journal that in October, 1947, 16 per cent. of members were paying subscriptions on the highest rate, indicative that they had salaries of £450 and over, hardly redounds to the credit of the employers, inasmuch as £500 a year and less, is statistically classified as the "lower income group."

In view of these hard facts, the N.E.C. should take off the kid gloves, ascertain the percentage of members in the "lower income group" and use this important point in our case.

Hackney H. A. LAKEY.

The Key—Education

MY advice to "One Just 22," who complains in the January journal that he must wait for eleven years before reaching his maximum, would be:

Forget your labourer's paradise, your barrow-boy's Shangri-La. The remedy is in your own hands. Study for a professional examination and, having passed it, apply for some of the many higher-grade vacancies, thereby testing the ability you claim.

Acceptance of this advice will entail much hard work and sacrifice of leisure. But a young man with initiative should be making his future, not waiting to age prematurely. If he does, he may reach the happy position when, like myself, he can afford to refuse another post at £800 a year when he does not find it to his liking. And I am yet

"WELL UNDER THIRTY-TWO."

PLURAL GRADING
Advantage to the Officer

PLURAL grading—the practice of grading a post in more than one grade—condemned by R. GARWOOD in the December journal—is the logical reply to the ridiculously short and overlapping APT grades which stimulate frequent movement among officers because they never get more than three years' prospect of promotion compared with ten or more in teaching, the civil service, and university lecturing.

The following scales are commonly paid to qualified and experienced librarians: senior lecturer in librarianship at commercial colleges—£700 to £850; university sub-librarian — £500 to £750; librarian in London government departments—£700 to £850. An equivalent APT grading would be IV to VIII (£480 to £760) or more; but, in practice, the lower grades only are selected for posts of comparable or greater responsibility, so that there is parity of the minima rather than the maxima. Committees are naturally suspicious of a new officer's ability when he is first appointed, but are willing to pay him a reasonable salary when he has proved his worth, as the foregoing scales show. NALGO should have traded on this aspect of human nature in fixing the length of the APT scales.

Central Library, P. HEPWORTH.
Stafford.

N.E.C. ELECTIONS
"Elaborate Farce"?

THE recent T.U.C. ballot provoked one critic to say that it ignored "basic democratic principles." In that ballot, however, members did know what they were voting for. That is more than they do in the annual "democratic" election for the N.E.C., in which they will soon be invited to take part.

It is surprising that this elaborate farce has existed so long without serious criticism. Perhaps the reason is that the vocal minority (branch officers, and so on), are in the happy position of being able to form their own opinions of candidates, whereas the apathetic majority suffer in silence.

The average member has several methods of approach open to him. He can mark his paper blindly in the manner of a once-a-year punter. He can take into account the "NALGO and allied experience" on the back of the form—a method which favours candidates with "seniority" and tends to keep out the younger element. Or he can rely on the guidance of his district representatives. Even if the representatives can give such guidance—which is not at all certain—this may result, as it did in this branch, in a member voting for a candidate holding views opposed to his own.

The Eastbourne branch has been seriously concerned on these points and intends to join the Folkestone branch in a motion to this year's Conference on the subject. Two alternatives have been considered: That district representatives should make the election; or that short election addresses should be circulated with ballot papers. The latter suggestion is more favoured than the former, although it is realised that both have their limitations.

My executive committee would like to hear from other branches or members who have ideas on the subject.

MAURICE STEVEMAN.
Hon. Secretary.
Eastbourne Branch.

Representation for Low-Paid?

MR. FERNLEY'S call in the December journal for direct representation on the N.E.C. for utility members is one which NALGO cannot ignore if it wishes to grow in strength. But he should go further and ask for adequate representation of the lower salary grades.

A list of N.E.C. members showing salary grades would, I am sure, show a small representation—or none at all—of the general clerical and miscellaneous grades, who are the backbone of the Association. The reason for this is the obsolete method of the N.E.C. ballot. The low-salaried member, even if nominated, has little chance of election, because the members of the district, knowing little of those for whom they are asked to vote, are guided by the history of the nominee as set out on the ballot paper. Thus, the chief officers, deputies, etc., who are usually officers of the district committee, are elected year after year without regard for their ability to serve the best interests of members.

Can anyone tell me why establishment officers, employed by local authorities and in opposition to NALGO representatives at branch level, are allowed to serve on the N.E.C.?

Town Hall, T. W. HASLAM.
Sheffield.

A COMMONS QUESTION
Mr. Piratin Explains

A PARAGRAPH in "A NALGO Diary" in the January "L.G.S.," entitled "Won't Somebody Tell Him?" refers to a question of mine in Parliament on December 8. I trust that you will allow me to comment on it.

Your contributor, "Abingdon," who observed the apparent contradiction between the question and the Communist Party policy, might have taken the trouble to find out what was behind it. It came to my attention that discussions were taking place between a number of heads of departments of the Stepney borough council and the leader of the council, on the question of in-

creases in their salaries. For example, one gentleman receiving £1,700 a year would like to receive £2,000. I understood that the leader of the council was amenable to these requests. This was in direct contrast with his attitude when demands have been made for wage increases from the lower ranks. In fact, on such occasions, when the Communist Party group have supported the demands, he has introduced "Government policy" and condemned the Communist attitude as "anti-Government propaganda."

I therefore decided gently to remind the leader of the council of the "Government policy" by tabling the question in the House. Unfortunately, the *direct* question which I tabled, relating to the *particular* circumstances, was rejected by the Clerk of the Table, who advised that the only way in which the question could possibly be answered was to ask the Chancellor "if he was aware, etc."; which, of course, is open to some misconstruction.

P. PIRATIN.
House of Commons,
S.W.1

THOSE COVER CLIMBERS

"In Imminent Danger"

FAR from depicting "In Union —Progress," the artist of your cover cartoon in the January journal gives the impression that the local government and nationalised services are in imminent danger of collapse and destruction. Neither L.G.O. nor Electricity is belayed to the mountain or in a position to withstand a strain on the rope; Electricity could not hold Gas by gripping the rope with his two hands; whilst L.G.O. must surely be attempting to commit suicide and to destroy the whole party if he thinks he could assist Health with one hand only.

It is a sign of complete despair for a climber to grip the rope above him, particularly when it is going away from him at an acute angle and it surely could not have been intended that Health was in the parlous condition depicted. No wonder Transport seems to be watching the proceedings so anxiously!

GRAHAM WILSON.
"High Bield,"
Loose, Maidstone.

We grovel before this—and other—experts and promise to do our best to persuade the artist to take a NALGO Swiss holiday and learn all about it!

FIRST ELECTRICITY BRANCH

"Northmet" Claim Refuted

IT was with astonishment that members of my branch and I read in the January "L.G.S." Mr. Dale's claim, in his admirable article in the "Successful Branches" series, that the Northmet branch was the first composed solely of electricity officers. My branch, more familiarly known as the J.E.A. branch, and never composed of anyone but electricity officers, can insist that membership dating from 1933 is considerably older than the Northmet's immature 1946.

I grant that because the London & Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority was often confused with municipal undertakings, in consequence not only of its title, but of the powers vested in it—which were usually associated with local bodies —a mistake was easy; except, of course, when service conditions matters were placed before the Association. Then it was often made plain that our problems were so divergent from those of local government officers that they must be placed on a very remote shelf in the hope that everyone concerned would forget NALGO's dreadful secret—the J.E.A. branch.

This branch, in its refusal to be treated as a "skeleton in the cupboard," made vigorous, and, I am glad to say, successful efforts to dispel this belief. Now that the branch has transferred to the South Eastern district and will shortly have a new name, I feel that the Northmet branch should retract its statement and allow the J.E.A. branch to pass into the shadows of immortality shrouded in its cloak of longevity, unimpaired if unmourned.

J. D. S. MOUNTFORT.
L. and H.C.J.E.A. Branch.

We apologise to Mr. Mountfort and his members. Mr. Dale, of course, meant that Northmet was the first "company" electricity branch, and that was how we interpreted his claim.

. . . and Stretford Too

THE Stretford and district electricity board branch was formed in May, 1942, and functioned until last October, when it was absorbed into the newly formed Manchester Sub-Area Electricity branch. Stretford members were amongst the pioneers in the formation of the latter branch which, whilst not officially formed until October, 1948, has been operating by means of a consultative committee since nationalisation.

6, Hilrose Avenue, J. THORP.
Urmston, Manchester.

£1,500,000 LENT IN 1948

N.B.S. Asks for More

BETWEEN 1945 and 1948, the assets of the NALGO Building Society increased by £2 million, from £4½ million to £6½ million. In the same period, the Building Society loaned £4¾ million to members to help them buy new homes. Of this sum, £1½ million was advanced last year alone to 1,280 members.

Investment accounts at the end of 1948 totalled 28,000. During the year approximately £1,200,000 was invested in the Society. But large sums were also withdrawn, and, allowing for these, the net amount of new investments was only about £600,000, less than half the amount advanced on mortgage in the same period.

These figures show that, if the present rate of lending is to be maintained, the amount of investments by members must be greatly increased. We hear a great deal nowadays about Britain's balance-of-payments problem and the need to increase exports to balance imports. The Building Society's problem is exactly the opposite—to increase "imports" (members' investments) to balance "exports" (advances made to other members to help them buy their homes): over a given period the two amounts must be approximately equal.

At present, only about one in seven of NALGO members invest their savings in the Building Society. The Society is looking to the other six-sevenths to open accounts and thus to ensure that adequate funds continue to be available to meet the needs of borrowers in the future.

Provident Society's New Benefits

SINCE July 5, 1948, there has been some duplication of benefits under the NALGO Provident Society's hospital and nursing home scheme with the benefits provided under the Government's health services scheme.

At its meeting in October, 1948, the committee of management decided to allow payment of a reduced contribution of 1s. 7d. a month by every member contracting out of benefit for medical practitioner's fees. At its meeting on January 16, 1949, the committee decided to operate the following further improvements from February 1, in relation to expenditure incurred after that date, namely:

1. **Claimable expenditure.**—The first £5 or £4 10s. of claimable expenditure will be paid under the hospital and nursing home scheme instead of having to be borne by the member or person insured.
2. **Convalescent benefit.**—A sum not exceeding £5 in any one year will be paid towards the cost of maintenance in a recognised convalescent home. (It is expected that this extension will be of assistance for wives and children insured under the scheme as well as allowing for a third week of residence at Knole Lodge, where necessary, for a member insured under Table I as well as under Table III).
3. **Fees for Nursing Home, Hospital or Sanatorium or for a qualified nurse at home.**—The existing benefit is increased from £6 6s. a week with a maximum of £25 4s. for 28 days, to £1 1s. a day up to a maximum of £29 8s. for 28 days.

The maximum benefit in any year for each person insured remains at £50.

The ability of the society's funds to meet expenditure involved by the above extensions can be ascertained only as the scheme proceeds. Accordingly, it is necessary to view the new benefits as an experiment at this stage. The extension of benefits depends largely upon the maintenance of a steady and sufficient income from contributions and, therefore, increased membership is of paramount importance.

B & O Fund Increases Allowances

TO help beneficiaries keep pace with the increased cost of living, the NALGO Benevolent and Orphan Fund committee decided on January 14 to increase the scale of allowances used by local committees as a guide when dealing with applications for assistance. This, it is estimated, will cost the Fund approximately £7,000 a year.

The committee also agreed to continue its much appreciated practices of helping some beneficiaries to take a summer holiday, and of sending Christmas hampers to those in special need. In 1948, £3,177 was spent on holidays for 288 beneficiaries and their families, and £1,230 in providing Christmas gifts or hampers to 540 people.

Last year the Fund sold 384,000 Christmas cards, making a profit of £1,800. It is intended to sell Christmas cards again this year, and the committee will shortly be considering new designs.

"Take care of the pence for the pounds will take care of themselves"

This saying is attributed to William Lowndes who was Secretary of the Treasury under William III. Lord Chesterfield described Lowndes at the time as a "covetous, sordid fellow," but he was prejudiced, and we think there is as much wisdom in the remark to-day as there was more than two hundred years ago. We can't accept pence, but your florins invested regularly will soon grow into pounds.

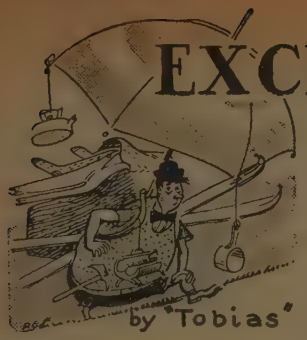
INTEREST ON SHARES **2¼%** PER ANNUM

MINIMUM SUBSCRIPTION 2/- PER MONTH

TAX PAID BY THE SOCIETY

NALGO BUILDING SOCIETY
1, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, N.W.1
ASSETS EXCEED £6,500,000

EXCELSIOR!



by "Tobias"

IF there is one thing which, more than any other subject, is capable of inspiring our branch to high eloquence, it is the matter of extra-NALGO activities—such things as social gatherings (including the annual Conference), and sports (including cockroach races in the office basement). In fact, we are strong supporters of any and every excuse for the getting together of local government officers for a purpose not directly connected with their rights, privileges, and duties as NALGO members.

A typical harangue, in Rufus's best oratorical style, would undoubtedly contain a reference to the well-known set of circumstances which is said to produce in Jack and/or Jill a certain dullness of character. "It is only by sharing a man's leisure hours," we explain, "that you get to know him well enough to work wholeheartedly with him in the Association." (A pause to allow our audience to meditate on the awful possibilities of being unaware that one's colleague is a secret teetotaller, or a backroom betting-abstainer.) "As for the office—why, if Alderman Jove only realised what a difference these social and sports activities make to our productivity, he'd insist on our spending twenty-four hours a day at them. . . ."

These arguments were duly trotted out in favour of the latest idea, for which any credit must go to Sackbutt. In simple language, it was that, as we were in comparative proximity to a part of the country where the ground tends to rise more than somewhat, we should constitute ourselves a mountaineering club.

I was not enthusiastic. Being rather more richly endowed than some of the others with tissues of the type known vulgarly as adipose or fatty, I could not see myself shining as a climber (except perhaps around the seat of my pants if I happened to indulge, involuntarily, in a method of descent known as the sitting glissade). Therefore, when it was suggested that our activities should commence in earnest one week-end recently, I clutched at all sorts of straws which might possibly set the wind blowing in another direction.

"We ought to be devoting all our energies," I pointed out, "to thinking up motions for the annual Conference."

"Nonsense, they get far too many motions—you're always saying so."

"Yes, but the way to cut them down is not for branches deliberately to deny themselves their democratic rights——"

"O.K., then. This week-end's a heaven-sent opportunity for us to exercise our rights—among other things. In the hut at night our minds, invigorated by the mountain air, will be keen as never before. Even you, Tobias, will be three times the NALGO member you were. . . ."

Although uncertain as to whether this would be altogether an advantage, I grudgingly agreed to lend dignity to the week-end by my presence. I know my branch well enough to be aware that my absence would be the signal for a covey of Conference motions (well, do you prefer *gaggle*?), each craftily designed to cramp my style in one way or another.

I have never been able to understand why it is that mountains invariably get themselves planted as far away as possible from the centre of civilisation, from which one would naturally try to reach them. I found myself completely exhausted by the number of miles we had to walk from the bus to the mountain, and I had no sooner set foot on the mountain than I set foot off it, so to speak.

The others, having taken the precaution of not allowing me to carry any of the breakable provisions, were of opinion that no great harm had been done by my fall. As to myself, my only wish was that I had fallen on my back instead of my front, so that, like an overturned tortoise, I should have had to lie there helpless, awaiting a merciful death from exposure or birds of prey.

My trouble was that, by trying to allow for all eventualities, I was only one stage better than Daffy, who had arrived in high heels and carrying her usual bulky handbag, to which, with great presence of mind, she had added a toothbrush. My pack contained, besides six changes of clothing and rations of various kinds, a misnamed "handy" volume on mountaineering, a golf-umbrella (to be used as a parachute in case of need), and an electric heater, which my wife had pressed on me and which I was now at pains to conceal from the rest of the party. Strapped to my person by a climber's rope were a pair of skis and an ice-axe which someone had lent me.

The others, although more sensibly equipped, made heavy going of the climb, which could scarcely be described as one of this country's more famous feats of daring. Sackbutt and young Betty were the only ones to reach the top.

The rest of us congregated in a hut, where, despite a certain chill and dampness, we managed to achieve some comfort round an oil-stove, while consuming some food and stimulants. When Sackbutt arrived, he told us tales of his experiences in the Himalayas during his Army service, and, watching Betty as she listened, starry-eyed, I began to have an inkling as to why he had been so keen on this climbing business.

When at last I fell asleep (due to the intoxicating mountain air), a sing-song was in progress. Space, among other things, does not permit of quotation from the more earthy ballads, but I seem to remember a couple of stanzas which went:

When I was a G.D., a G.D., a G.D.,
I used to get up in the mornin'
And do all my work with the greatest precision—
So I'm still in the grade I was born in.

(Here I must register a strong protest against the editorial blue pencil, which has robbed readers of a most interesting and revealing verse beginning, *When I was a Chief Official . . .*)

Unfortunately, I could not observe at first hand the immediate benefits to productivity in the office, as the effect of my unwonted exertions was such that for a few days I had to remain in bed. On my return to duty, I found Daffy, too, just getting back, and hobbling painfully from blisters on her feet. And apparently a visit by Rufus to his doctor had confirmed aggravation of an unsuspected heart condition, which would necessitate his going slow for some time to come.

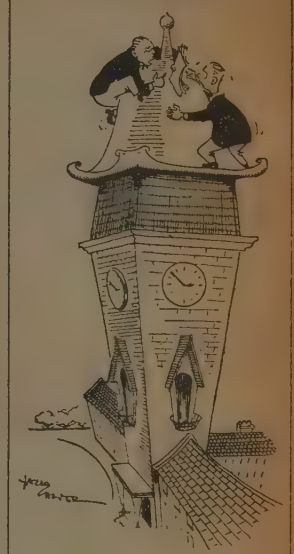
Of course, we had never got down to any Conference motions in the course of the week-end, and now it seemed that the health position of the staff would not permit of a meeting being held in time.

The one bright spot was that Sackbutt's matrimonial prospects must be brighter now that Betty had seen him in the light of a mountaineering hero.

"Well, my boy," I said heartily, slapping him on the back, "do I hear the echo of wedding-bells, ha, ha?"

"If you do," he growled morosely, "it must be singing in your ears after that skinful of stimulant you had. It may interest you to know that Betty is now so keen on climbing that she's getting herself a job in Switzerland."

This Local Government!



". . . that the matter be considered at the highest level."

AT RANDOM——by "Hyperion"

Thought for the Month

A LIFE without adventure is unsatisfactory; but a life in which adventure is allowed to take whatever form it will is sure to be short.—*Bertrand Russell.*

Isn't Whitehall Wonderful?

Every woman by whom or on whose behalf a claim for maternity benefit is made shall furnish evidence that she has been, or that it is to be expected that she will be, confined by means of a certificate given in accordance with the rules set out in Part II of the said Schedule . . ." Statutory Instruments, 1948, No. 1,175, para. 2.

Brevities

Every agitator should be made to prove his means of livelihood.—*Lord Tennyson.*

The big powers should declare definitely where they stand, and upon whom.—*New York Star.*

The happiest wife is not the one who marries the best man, but the one who makes the best of the man she marries.—*Dr. Fort Newton.*

With engaging naivete an American preacher startled his congregation by pleading: "Help us, O Lord, when we want to do the right thing, but know not what it is. But help us most when we know perfectly well what we ought to do and do not want to do it."—*Oswald Schwarz.*

Local Government Postbag

"Gentlemen—Thank you for your letter and for the efforts of the Rodent Officer. I should like to point out, however, that I pay 5s. under protest since no mice were caught, nor were they persuaded to evacuate. However, I derive some consolation from the fact that, through sitting up quietly at night with a hockey stick, I have succeeded in demolishing the unwanted rodents by deftly and adroitly tapping them on the head with the stick—which weighs 20 ozs. Yours affectionately, G.E.T.H."

"*Re my application for a municipal dwelling. Since I last applied, several circumstances have occurred to my disadvantage. I am now married with one child . . .*"

Frank

"Mr. C——'s career includes 22 years of local government service, including nine years as a deputy borough treasurer. He has chosen as his subject 'HELL ON EARTH.'"—*From programme of Civics Christian Fellowship meeting.*

This English

The bold Jargoneers, the dashing cavalry of the bureaucratic army, are thundering in every direction, uttering their barbarous cries. The latest way of describing food is "energy units." We should soon know how many energy units constitute an adequate nutrition intake or throughput of dietary elements.

—"*Beachcomber.*"

How Are the Mighty Fallen

Stuffed bloodhound in case, 4 ft. ×2 ft. × 3 ft. high; beautiful specimen; will any museum, school, etc., accept as gift? Seen London.—*Advertiser in The Times.*

Happy Warriors

"The town has four camps of 200 units for single men. Each camp is equipped with a YWCA block for indoor recreations, and a caterer's block where the men are fed."—*Auckland Star.*

A NALGO DIARY

By "ABINGDON"

Food Office Fairyland: Schools at the Town Hall: Photographic Society Revived

MOST popular Santa Claus with young **Wandsworth**, I hear, was the one who made his headquarters at the local food office. Instead of the normal scene of busy clerks behind counters, the eyes of children accompanying their mothers during Christmas week to collect the ration of cod liver oil and orange juice were greeted with a Fairyland more wonderful than any to be seen in the neighbouring stores.

Contributing to the atmosphere of festivity were two model railways in full operation, three rocking-horses, a giant decorated, illuminated tree—and Santa Claus. The fact that on the first day he was beardless and on the second was a woman (the only member of the staff who fitted the small-size borrowed costume), in no way spoiled the fun, and as a result many new "clients" were attracted. Through the co-operation of the staff and local tradesmen, no expense was involved, and Major R. H. Jerman, the town clerk and food executive officer, whose idea it was, is satisfied that it was all well worth while.

Civics Without Tears

CIVICS is fast becoming an accepted subject in school curricula, and the daily inquiries received in NALGO's P.R. department show that teachers are anxious to make their lessons both interesting and of lasting value. Local authorities and their staffs are being asked to co-operate, and many are doing so with energy and imagination. Also at Wandsworth, for example, parties of senior school-children, accompanied by teachers, make fortnightly visits to the municipal buildings.

They are greeted by the mayor, who tells them about her duties, the history of her office, the borough and its coat-of-arms, and explains the council agenda and minutes. In one of the committee rooms, the children hold a specimen committee meeting, with a prepared agenda, under the chairmanship of one of the councillors, followed by "question-time," during which their queries are answered by the appropriate chief officer. They visit the members' library and the mayor's and mayoress's parlours, and finally, go to the marriage room, where they meet the superintendent registrar and learn something about civil marriages.

So impressed were two B.B.C. observers who were present during one of the recent visits, that they propose describing them in an early European Service programme as an example of how Britain is teaching its children democracy.

£5,000 Exhibition

WHAT promises to be one of the finest civic exhibitions yet seen in London will open at **Hammersmith** on March 5. The opening ceremony will be performed by Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery, who was himself a student at St. Paul's School there—and used the headmaster's study as his headquarters when preparing the plans for the invasion of Europe—after first receiving the Freedom of the Borough. The exhibition, estimated to cost £5,000, has been designed to cover all sections of the life of the community and to portray all the borough's services.

Most organisations in the borough are actively supporting the civic week and, before it opens, Hammersmith branch of NALGO is to signal its appreciation of the cordial relations between council and staff by presenting to the borough a badge of office for the deputy mayor.

For Photographers

BEFORE the war, the NALGO Postal Photographic Society brought pleasure and good advice to its members. The war drove it into suspended animation, but now, I am glad to hear, it is being reformed and is seeking new members.

As its name indicates, the society operates by post. Each member receives each month a portfolio of prints submitted by his fellow members, and is asked to insert his own print, criticise those of his colleagues, then post the portfolio to the next member on the list. When, at the end of its round, the portfolio reaches him again, he extracts his print with the constructive comments upon it of all his fellow members.

Membership costs only 5s. a year. All interested should write to the honorary secretary, A. C. WILDSMITH, Water Engineer's Office, 5, Northumberland Avenue, North Shields.

Round the L.G. Clock

AMID the grave preoccupations of national and international events, the Bureau of Current Affairs has not, hitherto, given much attention to local government. At last, it is repairing the omission, and the mid-January issue of its popular Map Review, under the title "A Day on the Rates," makes a lively start by showing, in jolly pictures, how, every waking hour, the "Payups" are dependent upon the local authority for their health, comfort, happiness, and life itself. It is an engaging and provocative attempt to interest and enlighten the citizen, and should be of value to all P.R.O.s. Two more are promised—one on February 12, showing how the services are run, and one on March 12, describing how they are paid for, with the possibility of a fourth, in April, telling how a councillor is elected and what he does. When completed, sets will be available from the Bureau, 117, Piccadilly, London, W.1, at 3s. 9d. for three or 5s. for four.

Home Helpers Help Themselves

ONE of the newest members of the NALGO Consultative Committee, the recently formed National Association of Home Help Organisers, is letting no grass grow under its feet. Besides holding regular meetings, the association is now producing a monthly chronicle which reports progress, and invites exchange of views. It aims to improve the home help service, give information and advice, and to collaborate with other interested organisations. Editor is Miss I. Barker, 31, Margaretta Terrace, Chelsea, London, S.W.3. Annual subscription 3s. including postage.

New N.E.C. Member

ALL delegates who attended the NALGO Conference at Blackpool in 1945 will be glad to hear that the man most responsible for its success, A. E. FITTON, for many years secretary of the **Blackpool** branch, has been elected to the N.E.C. in succession to Miss JANE DOWNTON, whose resignation I recorded in December. Mr. Fitton, who is a sanitary inspector, is also a leading member of the North-Western and North Wales district committee.

Reluctant Farewell

ESSENTIAL as it is to-day, the formation of separate branches for electricity officers does often mean the parting of old friends and the loss to local government branches of valued colleagues. Such was the case when E. S. WORRALL, chairman of the Rochdale branch for eleven of the past thirteen years, and a member of its executive committee for thirty years, recently relinquished his office to join the new electricity branch. As a token of the appreciation of his former colleagues, E. L. RILEY, N.E.C. chairman, presented him with an inscribed umbrella.

Gratefully Received

GENEROUS gifts have benefited NALGO's War Memorial and Benevolent Funds. The profits of **Loughborough** branch's first draw brought £32 12s. 10d. to the former; and eight **Bournemouth** sanitary inspectors, who each received £5 from the Ministry of Labour for the practical training of students, gave the entire £40 to the latter.

Study Books Wanted

TO help students, the NALGO Lending Library wishes to buy copies, in reasonably good condition, of the following books, for which it offers the prices mentioned:

Stone's Hospital Organisation and Management, 1944, 28s.;

Stone's Hospital Accounts and Financial Administration, 20s.

New District Officers

THE Association has recently recruited four new assistant district officers, to whom I offer a hearty welcome. They are:

Southern District (at Reading).—R. A. CARPENTER, former branch secretary and staff side secretary of the local joint committee at St. Pancras metropolitan borough, where he had served in various departments for 16 years.

North-Western and North Wales district (at Manchester).—R. I. HOOPER, who has had 25 years' railway service (occupying every branch office in the N.U.R.), two years in the fuel department at Fishguard (when he was chairman of the local branch of N.U.P.E.), four years as county fuel officer, and 12 years' membership (two as chairman) of Fishguard and Goodwich U.D.C.

North Wales and Monmouthshire district (at Cardiff).—T. B. PONTON, former branch secretary, Monmouth county branch, staff side secretary of local joint committee, and member of district committee, with 20 years in local government.

North-Eastern district (at Newcastle).—H. B. WILLIAMS for 15 years on NALGO's Headquarters' staff, latterly as senior assistant in the service conditions department.

Backroom Boys

THROUGHOUT the 44 years of its existence, NALGO's strength has rested very largely on its honorary branch officers, and, in particular, on its branch secretaries.

They are the "backroom boys" of the Association without whose unassuming and too little recognised toil it could not exist. It is with particular pleasure, therefore, that I pay tribute this month to two outstanding figures among them—H. CHARLTON, of Bolton, and T. W. MASLEN, of Coventry.

It is difficult to believe that the ever-youthful Mr. Charlton can have been a branch secretary for 21 years: yet that is the fact, which his branch has just recognised by electing him its president. It is a well-deserved tribute, for it would be difficult to find a more efficient branch officer.

Mr. Maslen has not seen quite such long service—he was appointed secretary of Coventry branch in 1934—but his service there, on the district committee, and for three years on the N.E.C., has been no less distinguished. He has now been compelled to retire by pressure of work on the reconstruction of Coventry—he is chief clerk in the engineer's department.

Ex-N.E.C. Member In Honours List

OLDER members will be interested to hear that E. A. CHAPMAN, who served on the N.E.C. from 1926-30, when he was principal clerk, education department, Glamorgan C.C., was awarded the M.B.E. in the King's New Year Honours for his work as secretary of the Welsh Academic Board of Technology.

Also honoured were at least ten NALGO members. They are:

C.B.E.

J. W. McKillop, J.P., lately county clerk, Invernessshire.

T. Walling, director of education, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

O.B.E.

J. Durham, F.S.A.A., treasurer, West Riding C.C.

H. S. Ganderton, county surveyor, Wiltshire C.C.

E. E. King, town clerk, West Ham (for services to town planning).

H. J. Tillson, county homes officer, Leicestershire C.C.

M.B.E.

T. J. Evans, chief finance officer, Carmarthenshire education authority.

F. Johnson, master Harton Institution, South Shields, past-president of the branch; ex-chairman of the north-eastern district committee; and member of the north-eastern provincial council.

G. G. Marsland, M.I.C.E., local fuel overseer, Cheltenham.

A. Wade, chief sanitary inspector, Nottingham.

We shall be glad to hear of any other members whose names have been inadvertently omitted from the above list.

YOUR ideas, YOUR experience . . . they can help your colleagues

Here is a chance to make your voice heard, perhaps even to influence the future decisions of Councils throughout the country. The Editor of the **MUNICIPAL JOURNAL** is offering £50 in awards for the best articles, on any facets of local government, submitted to him in 1949. Starting shortly, an entry will be published each week under the writer's name and paid for at full rates.

Full details in this week's MUNICIPAL JOURNAL

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MISCELLANEOUS

MONOMARKS. Permanent London Address. Letters redirected. 5/- p.a. Royal Patronage. Write **Monomark BCM/MONO84, London, W.C.1.**

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SCOTTISH NOTES

Next J.I.C. to Examine Charter Anomalies and Appeals

FEW members seem to know that these notes are compiled by the district officer and that he is able in them to deal only with factual information about the work of the joint industrial council and its ancillary counterparts

Until last July, we were able to give information about salaries and conditions of service over a wider field. Now, however, the work of the various functional councils in the health service and of the electricity and gas councils is dealt with nationally, amply covered by reports on other pages of "L.G.S."

There is, however, a possibility that the Scottish district committee will take over the compilation of "Scottish Notes" and widen their sphere of interest.

The next meeting of the J.I.C. will be its annual meeting this month. By the time it is held these notes will be published, and it is, therefore, not possible to report on the negotiations regarding anomalies under the recent Charter adjustment, or on appeals machinery. Items likely to be considered at the meeting cover a variety of subjects and form a programme for the immediate future.

Association policy will, as time goes on, be affected by developments in the nationalised services. Already, the health service Whitley council has abolished the grouping scheme and salaries from December last are to be according to the group 1 rates.

Typists' Scales

In electricity, special scales have been introduced for shorthand-typists and machine operators, and applications are being made to the district officer for immediate review to cover similar employment in local authorities.

Local joint committees are a feature of Association policy, accepted in England but not in Scotland. Their counterparts in the electricity supply industry have been set up in accordance with an agreement made by the National Council. Health service Whitley machinery contemplates similar committees at hospital management committee level. Greater effort must be made to establish them in local government.

Professional salary scales have not yet been discussed, but in view of the decision of the English N.J.C. to examine this problem, an approach must be made on similar lines to the Scottish J.I.C.

The extension of negotiating machinery for chief officers, now approved in England, must also exercise our minds. Again, in the nationalised services, consideration is being given to the salaries of those who would be regarded as chief officers in local government.

These and other cognate matters are receiving the attention of the staff side of the J.I.C. and progress will be reported from time to time.

Transport Staffs

EMPLOYEES of the Alexander Motor Service have formed three branches, covering staffs in the Glasgow, Falkirk, and Fife areas. A committee appointed by the staff of Scottish Motor Traction, Ltd., Edinburgh, to consider trade union membership, reported recently in favour of joining a trade union, and accepted a recommendation that NALGO was the organisation most likely to satisfy their needs.

New Year Honours

PETER CAMPBELL, now in retirement from his appointment as an organiser for the N.U.G. & M.W., has been awarded the O.B.E. He was chairman of the staff side of the J.I.C. from 1937 to 1945 and gave valuable service to the council. He was always a friend to NALGO, and his former colleagues on the J.I.C. are delighted with the honour which was conferred on him for his services to the Scottish nurses' salaries committee.

A Second A.D.O.

SCOTLAND is to have a second assistant district officer. An advertisement appears on this page, and the successful candidate will be appointed in Scotland by the Scottish members of the N.E.C. and a Headquarters officer.

NALGO wants:

Assistant District Officer

Applications are invited from men and women for the post of assistant district officer on Grade V of the Association's scale—£530–£580—the commencing point depending on experience and qualifications. The appointment will be subject to one month's notice on either side; a superannuation scheme is in operation.

The successful candidate will be required to organise local government and public utility and health service staffs, to attend meetings, and to represent the Association before local authorities and other bodies. Organising experience, energy, enthusiasm, and ability in public speaking are essential, and a knowledge of local government or of the public utility and health services, their functions and procedure, is desirable. Reasonable travelling and subsistence allowances will be paid.

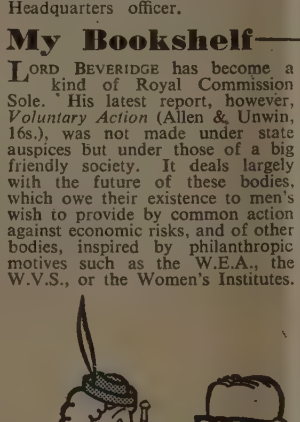
The officer appointed will be assigned initially to the Scottish District, 67, West Nile Street, Glasgow, C.1.

Applications giving full particulars of age, education, qualifications, NALGO and other experience, and names of three persons to whom reference may be made, must reach the General Secretary, NALGO, 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1. by February 26.

Canvassing members of the National Executive Council will disqualify.

My Bookshelf—by Edward Kay

LORD BEVERIDGE has become a kind of Royal Commission Sole. His latest report, however, *Voluntary Action* (Allen & Unwin, 16s.), was not made under state auspices but under those of a big friendly society. It deals largely with the future of these bodies, which owe their existence to men's wish to provide by common action against economic risks, and of other bodies, inspired by philanthropic motives such as the W.E.A., the W.V.S., or the Women's Institutes.



Can you direct me to the Sanitary Inspector's Office?

Lord Beveridge heartily advocates their continuance and expansion because "democracy can and should learn to do what used to be done for the public good by the wealthy." Although no opponent of state activity, he wants it supplemented by voluntary action, since a good society, he believes, depends not on the state but on the citizens and the free expression of their personalities.

This Is the Law

THE stream of books expounding the new law flows on unchecked. G. W. QUICK SMITH describes *The Transport Act, 1947*, as it affects road transport (Thames Bank Publishing Company, Leigh-on-Sea, 5s.), while the subject is covered more generally in the second edition of *The Law of Inland Transport*, by O. KAHN-FREUND (Stevens, 17s. 6d.), based on the classic treatise of H. W. Disney. In Shaw's *National Assistance*, PETER DOW explains the legal position resulting from the "final" break-up of the poor law by the Act of 1948 (Shaw & Sons, 25s.). Butterworths have issued, at 17s. 6d., a *Supplement to Hill and Kerrigan on the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947*, by D. P. KERRIGAN and EDMOND H. BODKIN; it contains the statutory instruments issued since the main work appeared as well as conveyancing precedents derived from the legislation. An 80-page pamphlet by C. I. V. ANDERSON on *Valuation for Rating* (Sweet & Maxwell & Stevens, 6s. 6d.) may justify its high price by the author's skilful compression of a vast topic. The fourth edition of H. STEVENS'S *Factory Law* is a thorough, well-arranged, and up-to-date statement of factory legislation. In *Death Duties* (Stevens, 4s.) K. MCFARLANE presents in clear and simple terms the essence of an executor's functions. Finally, three booklets "for Everyman"—*National Insurance and Social Service*, by EDMUND R. GIBBS (3s. 6d.), *Company Finance*, by LIONEL MUNDY (4s). and *Income Tax*, by R. A. BUTLER (3s. 6d.), published by Pen-in-Hand, Oxford; are convenient for those who want essentials without much detail.

This *Was* the Law

IN *The Trial of Jesus Christ* (Paternoster Press, 6s.) FRANK J. POWELL, a London magistrate, discusses the legal aspect of the most famous of all trials. He brings the world of two thousand years ago vividly before our eyes—law courts, the pull of social forces, and even some touches of Palestinian local government which have a modern ring.

Economics for Beginners

A SERIES of lectures to introduce engineering students to economics was delivered in 1945 by A. C. PIGOU, emeritus professor of political economy at Cambridge. Professor Pigou has had the happy idea of reprinting them under the title of *Income* (Macmillan, 5s.), and they form a useful introduction to economics. All the essentials are there, and there is an austere grace in the writing, but it is not diet for the immature.

Municipal Buildings and Others

ANOTHER essay in popularisation is MARTIN S. BRIGGS'S *The Approach to Architecture* (Allen & Unwin, 6s.). Here is what he says of municipal buildings: "Any such edifice should express and proclaim its civic purpose. It should not look like a theatre or a church or a school or a warehouse or a hospital or a factory . . . It forms a visible symbol of pride in our democratic way of life and should typify *our* interest and *our* power in communal government; for only the small-minded folk among us are content to grumble about what 'they' are doing at the town hall."

Improving Production

Factory Layout by W. J. HISCOX and JAMES STIRLING (Pitman, 7s. 6d.), will interest local government officers because it deals mainly with the problems of the "progress man," whose job it is to examine methods of production and advise on their improvement. He has no counterpart yet in the public service, but the organisation and methods technique operated by the Treasury and the London County Council suggests that he may be on his way.

Three Centuries of Mail

A READABLE and handsomely produced history of *The British Post Office*, by HOWARD ROBINSON, is issued at 42s. by Princeton University Press (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege). It describes the post office's primary function of carrying mail from the time of Henry VIII to the present day, and provides a fascinating background to British social and economic history.

Difficult Children

IN *Children in Need* (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.) DR. MELITTA SCHMIDEBERG writes understandingly about the psychology of "problem" children. Her criticisms of local authority and other children's institutions, however, ignore the heavy cost of providing a first-class service, and would have been more effective had she made a reasoned case for devoting still more economic resources to the solution of this problem, instead of assuming that all deficiencies are due to malice or thoughtlessness.

Other Books Received

A Reader's Guide to Parliament, by QUINTIN HOGG (Cambridge University Press for National Book League, 1s.). *Mental Health and World Citizenship*, a statement prepared by the World Federation for Mental Health for the 1948 international congress on mental health (H. K. Lewis, 1s.). *A Short Survey of Industrial Management*, by L. URWICK (British Institute of Management, 2s. 6d.). *Goodwill in a Great Society*, "a new pattern of social services," by ARTHUR RADFORD (National Council of Social Service, 2s.). *Parish Councils—Recreative and Social Facilities in Villages* (National Council of Social Service Advisory Handbook, 1s.). *The Co-operative Movement at Home and Abroad*, by HEBE SPAULL and D. H. KAY (Macmillan, 4s.).

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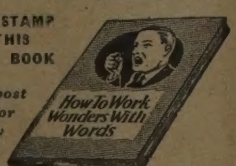

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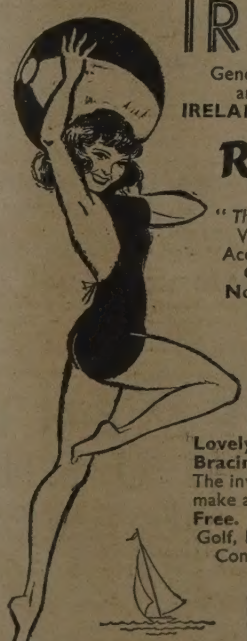

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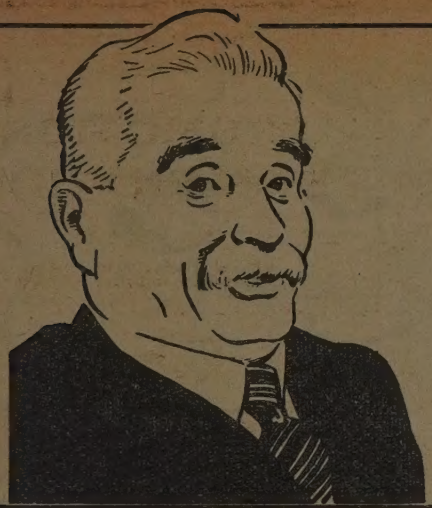

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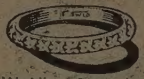
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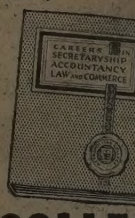

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